













SOME TRIBAL ORIGINS, LAWS, AND  
CUSTOMS OF THE BALKANS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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PLATE I.—MEN OF SHALA

*(Photo by Marubbi)*



# SOME TRIBAL ORIGINS LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF THE BALKANS

*By*

M. E. DURHAM

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

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DEDICATED TO  
JOAN AND WILL





## PREFACE

By way of Preface my main task is to give thanks to all who have helped me.

To the President and Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute I am especially indebted for permission to include in this book much material already published in the *Journal* of the Institute and its monthly periodical *Man*, and to reproduce also many illustrations. Nor is this all my debt, for had it not been for the kind interest and encouragement of many individual Fellows of the Institute I should hardly have accomplished my task.

To Baron Franz Nopcsa, whose knowledge of North Albania is unrivalled, and who was working there when I was, I am indebted for much kind help.

My debt to the many Balkan friends who admitted me to their daily life, and allowed me to see their way of living, is very great. This debt I have paid, I hope, in some degree by several years of hospital and refugee work among them.

These friends are too numerous to name, as they range from very humble peasants to officials and high ecclesiastics. But among them I would specially record my old Albanian guide, Marko Shantoya, without whose skill, kindness, and care I should never have accomplished the toilsome journeys in the mountains. The good old man died during the Great War. Peace be to his soul!

Thus many people have aided me, and to them is due all that may be of value in this book. For its errors I am alone responsible. That it is incomplete no one is more aware than myself. I can only plead that my plans, like so many others, were completely put an end to by the Great War.

M. EDITH DURHAM.

April 1928.



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THE TRIBES OF ALBANIA AND MONTENEGRO

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## SECTION I

### THE TRIBES OF ALBANIA AND MONTENEGRO

#### I. THE TRIBAL SYSTEM IN NORTH ALBANIA

THE tribal system seems to be a social stage through which mankind normally passes. Within historic times Europe was a welter of tribes, from which in the course of years have been evolved the present "Powers"—Powers which themselves are compounded each of several racial elements and whose frontiers are in a constant state of flux.

In Europe it is only in the Balkan peninsula that the tribal system survived intact into the twentieth century. The Great War has broken up the last tribe lands of Europe—Montenegro and North Albania; and as I lived for some time in each previous to the catastrophe, it seems worth while to record all the details I managed to collect about these interesting relics of a distant past.

The Balkans were tribal in Herodotus's day. Strabo (*ob.* A.D. 25) gives a clear account of the Illyrian and Epirotic tribes who in his time dwelt on the east coast of the Adriatic and had recently been subdued by Rome. "The Istri," says he, "are the first people on the Illyrian coast contiguous to Italy and the Carni. The present government has advanced the limits of Italy to Pola, a city of Istria." Now again, 1,900 years later, Italy has "advanced her limits"—and included Pola, and hankers after other districts which Strabo describes as under Roman rule. "Next come the Japodes, who are a warlike people, but were completely subdued by Augustus . . . the country is poor and the people live mainly on spelt and millet. Their armour is of the Celtic fashion. Their bodies are punctured like those of the other Illyrian and Thracian people." Next come the Liburnians with a city Scardona and a navigable river (the Kerka), and then the "coast of the Dalmatæ and their naval arsenal Salona. They were long at war with the Romans and had fifty considerable settlements, some of which had the rank of cities. Augustus burnt them down . . . then follows the river Narenta, and the peoples of the neighbourhood are the Duorizi, Ardæi, and Pleraii. . . . The Romans drove the Ardæi into the interior because the coast was infested by their piracies, and forced them to cultivate the land. But, as the country was barren, the nation was entirely ruined and nearly extinguished. The same happened to neighbouring nations. People once very powerful are now extinct or

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reduced to the lowest conditions, as the Antariatæ, Ardæi, and Dardani among the Illyrians, and the Triballi among the Thracians."

"Augustus burnt them down"—but their descendants survived. Many a Balkan tribesman became a Roman Emperor, and Rome no longer rules the Balkans. A race is seldom, if ever, extirpated. Probably many of our conquered races will survive the British Empire.

Strabo, going southward, mentions—in the Bocche di Cattaro—the city Rhizon (Risano), then Lissus (Alessio) and Dyracchium (Durazzo), with much detail regarding climate, crops, and population. Of great interest is his exact definition of the frontier where Greece begins, putting it much farther south than the present one. He describes the Epirote tribes, Threspoti, Cassiopæi, Amphilochi, and Molotti, and says as you sail into the Ambracian gulf (the gulf of Prevesa), on the south side are the Greeks and the temple of Apollo Actius, and on the north are "the Cassiopæi, an Epirote tribe extending as far as the recesses of the gulf. The Amphilochi are Epirotes, as are all those who inhabit the rugged country situate above and close to the Illyrian mountains. . . . With the Epiroti are mixed the Illyrian nations, some of whom are situate on the southern side of the mountains." He names eleven more tribes and states: "Formerly each of these nations was under its own Prince, save the Enchelii, whose chiefs descended from Cadmus and Harmonia. . . . The Molotti were subjects of Pyrrhus Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, and his descendants, who were Thesalians. The rest were governed by native princes. Some tribes were continually striving to obtain mastery over others, but were finally subdued by the Macedonians. They gave the name of Upper Macedonia to the country above Lyncestis, Pelagonia, Orestias, and Elimia. . . . Some writers extend the name Macedonia to all the land as far as Corcyra (Corfu), assigning as reason the mode of cutting the hair, their language, their use of the chlamys, and similar things in which they resemble the Macedonians. Some of them, however, speak two tongues. On the dissolution of Macedonia they fell under the Roman power. . . . At that time the whole of Epirus was well peopled . . . at present a great part is uninhabited, and the inhabited parts are in the state of villages or in ruins. Even the oracle of Dodona is deserted. . . . Persons who hold office among the Thesproti and Molotti are called *Peligones*, as among the Macedonians. . . . The country now called Macedonia was formerly called Emathia."

This is a lucid account of the tribal conditions at the beginning of the Christian era, conditions not yet quite dead. Traces of the language common to these Macedonian, Epirote, and Illyrian people are still found in Albania. "E Mathia" means "The Great." The Albanian tribe still has a nominal chieftain, and is ruled by a council of "pelaki"



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(peligones). *Lychnidis*, the Roman name for the lake of Ochrida, is possibly the Albanian "*Licheni*," a lake. And the *Molotti*, or *Molossi*, may mean mountain men, as does the Albanian *Maltsor*, from *Maltsia* mountains. (Usually incorrectly spelt *Malessori*, an Italianized form, it being against the principles of Italian to put "It" together.)

The Romans drove the Illyrian tribes into rugged ground. Similarly in North Albania of to-day the tribes owe their continued existence in a great part to the mountains. Conquerors always take the fat lands, leaving the lean to the conquered—if they leave them any. That many descendants of the ancient people survived is shown by the tradition to-day in the mountains that "*Latini*" or "*Pagani*" or "*Anas*" were living on the lands when the ancestors of the present tribes arrived. "*Anas*" is Albanian for "*indigenous*."

Roughly speaking, the man who tilled the soil and who herded beasts has been rudely displaced three times on the west side of the Balkan peninsula. (1) By the invading Roman. (2) By the invading Serb. (3) By the invading Turk.

The history of the present tribes is mainly that of the third displacement. Each tribe has a tale of origin. Unfortunately first the Balkan wars of 1912-13 and then the Great War interrupted and ended my work before I had collected them all. I give such details as I gathered.

The Albanian tribe (*Fis*) descends from one male ancestor (or several). All persons tracing descent from the same male ancestor, no matter how distant, are reckoned "brothers and sisters," and are not intermarriageable. The law of exogamy is most strictly observed. The heads of families know by heart surprisingly long pedigrees—knowledge of great importance, as both marriage and blood vengeance are regulated by consanguinity. We may be certain that groups which will not intermarry have in truth a common male ancestor. Women do not count. The child, I was told, has none of its mother's blood. Whence it follows that tribes which continually intermarry because they have not a common male ancestor are, in fact, often very closely related on the female side, having given daughters to, and taken wives from, each other for generations. But they jeered at me heartily when I suggested this.

Tribal instinct is far stronger than Church law. Many of these exogamous tribes are Catholic. The Catholic Church prohibits the marriage of second cousins—but no further. I asked an Albanian Franciscan, a tribesman himself, how he reconciled this with his strongly expressed opinion that to marry "one's own blood," however remote, was incest. "Suppose some fourth or fifth cousins asked you to marry them, could you, as priest, refuse?" He was much upset.

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Finally he said he supposed he could not; but that such a case had never occurred, and he hoped he should never have to do anything so horrible. So long as he lived in the mountains he was safe.

I dared not ask how many cousins in the female line he had married in all good faith.

The tribe is sometimes a group of several stocks, in which case marriage within the tribe is possible between them. These groups are called "bairaks" (standards: Turk.). Some tribes consist of but one bairak. The head is the "bairaktar" (standard-bearer). This post is hereditary from father to eldest son. Of old the bairaktar is said to have been important. In my time he had lost ground and was often quite cut out in council by abler men.

Each bairak contains many groups, called "vlaznii" (brethren), consisting of a family group including second cousins or even further. The Turkish word "mehala" is also used for these groups.

A vivid picture of North Albania before the coming of the Turk is given by Father Brocardus, a Dominican who wrote an account of the routes suitable for the Crusaders in 1332, and presented it to his sovereign, Lord Philippe de Valois. He shows Albania under Serb rule. Especially he recommends the route from Brindisi to Durazzo, and thence across "Abbanie where the people are devout and obedient to the Church of Rome," and thence by way of the Blaques (Vlahs of the Pindus) to Thessalonica.

Of the Kingdom of Rassie (Serbia) he says that it is a land where Catholics are treated with insult and violence. He proposes to the King of France: "Some movements to assail it, and certain easy conditions for taking it. . . . Among other things there is one which does much to make the capture of the said Kingdom of Rassie more easy. Be it known there are two nations, the one the Abbanois, and the other the Latins, who are both of the faith and owe obedience to the Church of Rome, according to which they have Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, and religious and secular priests of lower estate and degree. The Latins have six cities and as many bishops. These are Antivari—the Archiepiscopate—Cattaro, Dulcigno, Suacinense, Scutari, and Drivasto. In these cities only Latins live, and some are without the walls. In all their dioceses are Abbanois, who have also four cities: that is to say Polat Major, Polat Minor, Sabbate, and Albanie, which together with the Latins are all subject to the Archbishop of Antivari" (these "cities" are, in fact, districts), "and his Church. And though these *Abbanois have a language quite other from that of the Latins, they use the Latin letters in all their books*. Thus the power of the Latins is enclosed within the circuit of the cities which are theirs, though they have some vineyards and fields without the cities. . . . The Abbanois

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nation, which is the greatest, could put into the field more than 15,000 men on horseback, well fitted to wage war in the manner of their country, valiant and good fighters. And the said nations, both Latins and Abbanois, are harshly oppressed under the intolerable and very hard servitude of the most hateful and abominable lordship of the Slavs. Indeed, they are a downtrodden people; their clergy is lowered and humbled; their bishops and abbots often imprisoned; their nobles disinherited and imprisoned; their churches, both cathedrals and collegiate, are dispersed and deprived of power; their monasteries and priories lost and destroyed. They, one and all, would think to consecrate their hands in the blood of the said Slavs if they saw coming a Prince of France who would be their leader and chief against the said Slavs, the enemies of truth and of our faith. One thousand French horse and five or six infantry, along with the said Abbanois and Latins, could conquer at their ease the whole of this Kingdom of Rassie, such as it is."

This passage, written almost at the height of Serb power, shows clearly that the Serb conqueror had failed to destroy the Albanian sense of nationality, and failed to force the Serbian Orthodox Church upon the people; and that there was a very large Albanophone population with a Catholic clergy of its own. The bishoprics of Antivari, Scutari, Sappa, and Pulati still exist, and have survived both Serb and Turk. Into this reserve of Albanian nationality the refugees from the surrounding districts fled when the Turks advanced. The mountain population, then as now, was no doubt scattered in isolated houses or family groups of several houses on the mountain pastures, and not gathered into towns or villages. They formed "katuns." That the population was numerous is shown by the many ecclesiastical and political documents, correspondence with the Vatican, Venice, and Ragusa, and old Serbian archives. Thus in 1348 Tsar Stefan Dushan gives to the monastery he is founding at Prizren nine Albanian "katuns" near Prizren, the said Albanians to give serf labour to the monastery. He gives also some land in Upper Pulati, together with its inhabitants. Several still existing place-names are mentioned: Shikje, Krue e Madhe (the great spring of water), and Sakati. "The existing Catholic clergy at Shikje who have vineyards" are to pay a tribute of wine to the monastery (an Orthodox one), and so are certain other districts. The people of Lower Pulati are to pay tribute of 100,000 silk cocoons. Several mills are handed to the monastery and in one case the miller, Zan, and his brethren are mentioned. No one may erect a mill on Church land, under penalty of a fine and loss of the mill. (The Church alone has the right to grind corn. This would give it immense power.) Large districts of Lower Pulati are given to the Serb Church, including the



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present Kopliku; Albanian districts on the Drin are also given or ordered to pay tribute. All of which confirms Father Brocardus's statements.

Stefan Urosh III, when founding the monastery at Dechani, gives it in 1330 many "villages and katuns of Vlachs and Albanians between the Lim and White Drin," and gives a list of persons who are to pay tribute, the last of which are Zaharia and Mihal of Nikita in Pulati, who are to pay the former 4,000 and the latter 2,000 cocoons annually to the Church. All Vlachs and Albanians are to carry salt for the monastery. Thus numbers of peasants were put into the power of the Orthodox Church, but though severe laws were enacted against Catholicism, North Albania in large part remains Catholic.

So soon as the Serb Empire fell, references to Albanian chiefs become frequent, and the Catholic Church speedily took the ascendancy. Many of these chiefs took service with their men under Venice. Others were subsidized by Venice as allies. All documents show that at the time of the Turkish invasion there was a large Albanian population both in the mountains and on the plains, which then, as now, were largely used as winter pasture.

The swoop of the conquering Turk, the capture of Scutari and Alessio, the complete destruction of Drivasto, caused a great dislocation of population. As the Turk settled on the fat plains, numbers of refugees took to the mountains. The tradition now told in the mountains of the north is often that of these immigrant refugees, who tell of having found other inhabitants in the land, but the families who now trace direct male descent from these are few. The strict law of exogamy must, however, have forced the immigrant to intermarry largely with the old inhabitant, and the race continuity is, therefore, unbroken.

### 2. THE MALTSIA E MADHE GROUP

The tribes fall into several main groups.

The Malsia e Madhe (the Great Mountains) group consisted, when I visited it, of five large tribes and some smaller ones.

1. *Gruda*.—A tribe of one bairak, situated between the river Tsem and the old Montenegrin frontier. To the north of it is Triepshi and south is Hoti. Triepshi was part of this group till given to Montenegro in 1878. Gruda in 1908 consisted of about five hundred "houses." A "house" was roughly reckoned at from eight to ten souls.

Of these five hundred "houses," eighty traced descent from Berisha (see below), and thus are of old indigenous stock. The remainder, called Djell, said they were immigrants from the Herzegovina, and that



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the Gruda church was built three hundred and eighty years ago, soon after their arrival. This dates their settlement at the beginning of the sixteenth century—that is, after the Turks had annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Djell and Berisha stocks are intermarriageable. About half the tribe was Catholic and half Moslem. It is now scattered and partly destroyed. The Powers awarded it to Montenegro in 1913 as a war



FIG. 1.—SKETCH MAP OF ALBANIAN TRIBES IN 1913

prize in spite of the prayers of the people. It was devastated and many refugees fled to Scutari. Again, after the Great War, it was badly handled by the incoming Serbs, who were active against Moslem and Catholic alike. They even tore the rings from the hands of a poor old lady whose only crime was that she was Catholic. I saw many hapless refugees in Scutari in 1921, but was powerless to help them. As in the days of the Turk, a new foe was forcing a shifting of the peoples.

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2. *Hoti*.—A tribe situated south of Gruda and extending to the lake of Scutari. It owned also large winter pastures on the plains by the Boyana, and, as do the other Maltsia e Madhe tribes, descended yearly with great flocks. But in 1913, when both Hoti and Gruda were given by the Powers to Montenegro, the frontier line deprived them of their winter pasture. The gentlemen sent to draw frontiers had their heads full only of "strategy," and would not see that they were condemning a people to die of hunger. Both Gruda and Hoti have been thus ruined.

When I knew the tribe it was all Catholic but three houses—those of the bairaktar, which became Moslem seven generations before, after winning great honour from the Turks in a fight against Dulcigno. Marash Hutzi, the hereditary surgeon of the tribe, a singularly charming and intelligent old man, told me that the ancestor of Hoti, Geg Laz, came from Bosnia, and arrived with all his family shortly after the building of the church of Gruda. On arriving they found people, "Anas," living on the land and settled among them. From these "Anas" twelve houses of Hoti trace descent, and are intermarriageable with the descendants of Geg Laz. From what part of Bosnia they came he could not tell. Geg was head of a large family group of herdsmen which trekked southward, doubtless to escape serfdom under a Moslem overlord. Geg Laz had three brothers: Piper Laz, Vaso Laz, and Krasni Laz. Piper and Vaso, as we shall see, were ancestors of the Piperi and Vasojevitch tribes, which became Montenegrin in the eighteenth century. Krasni was ancestor of the Moslem Albanian tribe Krasnichi. Thus of the four, two are now Serbophone and Orthodox; one Catholic and Albanophone, and the other Moslem and Albanophone.

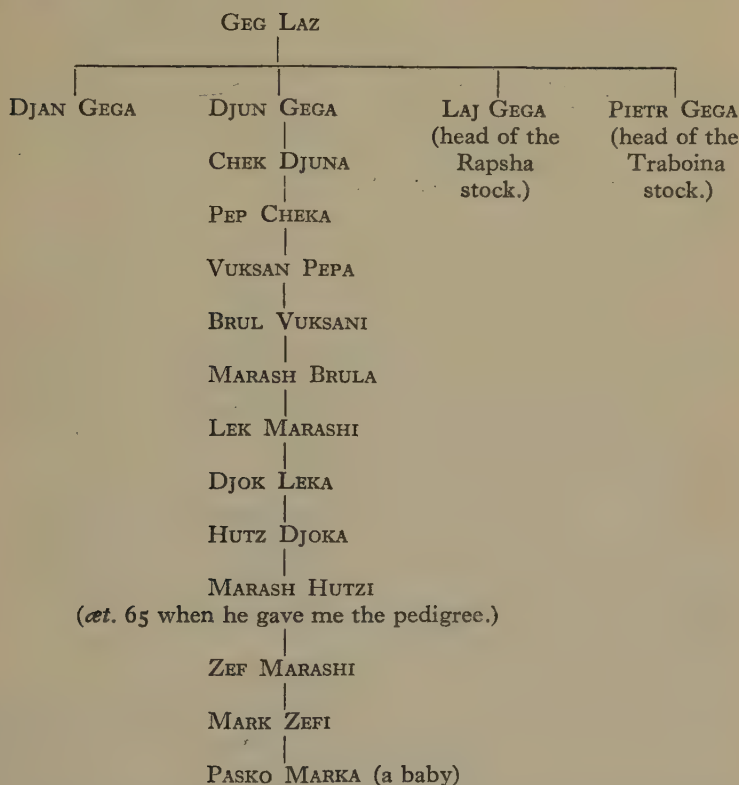
Hoti, when I knew it, was the leader tribe of Maltsia e Madhe, and had earned this right by valour in war. Hoti's energy in 1878 thwarted the decree of the Berlin Congress and saved Tuzhi and the Plava-Gusinje districts from Montenegro. My poor old friend, Marash Hutzi, told how he, as a young man, had rushed round and summoned Hoti to the rescue, and put such a force on the frontier that Montenegro dared not risk occupying the districts.

Geg Laz had four sons, each of whom became head of a group ("vlaznii"). Marash gave his pedigree as in the table on the page opposite.

In few other lands in Europe can a man give the names of his forbears for three hundred years. Poor Marash, who was one of the best, died of pneumonia during the revolt of the tribes against Turkish rule in 1911. His house and all he owned was burnt. I met him in an exhausted state among the refugees. He smiled and pulled from his breast the two picture postcards I had sent him from London, the only things he had saved from the wreck. I helped him, and he begged

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me not to give him more than his share. One of the Franciscans gave him shelter, for he was generally beloved, but he did not survive the winter. I mourned him at the time, but was later glad that he had died before his beloved tribe was handed to the enemy. The name "Hoti" is older than the arrival of Geg Laz. Jirecek, quoting the Venetian archives, states that the Hoti ("montanea Ottanorum") allied itself in 1474 with Ivan Tzrnojevitch and fought the Turks. The "Anas" must then have been numerous.



The tribe of Nikaj (see below) is also related to Hoti. Marash Hutzi said that Nikaj descends from a son of Krasnich. Baron Nopcsa learnt from another quarter that Nik was another brother of Geg Laz. That they are related is clear, for they are not intermarriageable.

Hoti usually marries the neighbour tribe Kastrati. As Kastrati mainly marries Hoti, after so many generations the two must be very closely related. But old Marash was extremely proud of the strict exogamy of the tribe. To marry "one's own blood" he looked on with unspeakable horror. I asked how many generations must pass before the descendants

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of Geg Laz would be intermarriageable. He said gravely that there was no knowing what the future would bring. People might learn bad ways from abroad. For his part he hoped that so long as the world lasted Hoti would never marry its own blood.

He was very certain that Geg Laz and his family were Catholics. The names in the pedigree indicate that they were Albanophone. Only one, Vuksan, is Slav.

3. *Kastrati*.—This consists of some five hundred houses on the mountains between the Hoti and Skreli tribe lands. The name is probably derived from the Roman fort (*castrum*) which guarded the road round the foot of the lake. "Kastr" as a place-name occurs elsewhere in Albania. The Kastrati were evidently a powerful tribe, for in 1403 we find Alexius Kastrati headman in a list of Albanian chiefs who are rewarded by the Venetians with gifts of cloth. Fine cloth was much coveted by the Albanians and appears often as payment of service.

Three hundred houses of Kastrati are of ancient Albanian origin. They trace descent from one Delti, or Dedli, who came with his seven sons from Drekalovitch, a part of the Kuchi tribe. The Drekalovitch trace descent from the Berisha (see below), which is the oldest of the tribes. When they arrived they found other inhabitants there who are said to have been Slavs, and from whom the other two hundred houses trace descent. All are now Albanophone, and the majority Catholic; the rest Moslem. The groups are intermarriageable.

4. *Skreli*.—A tribe of one bairak in the valley of the Proni Thaat, mainly Catholic, stated that it came from Bosnia some three hundred years ago. The name is said to derive from Shen Kerli—St. Carlo, possibly the patron saint of a church which has been destroyed, as they now have St. Nikola of Bari as patron.

5. *Klementi*, often called by the Albanians Kilmeni.—A large and widely spread tribe of four bairaks—Seltzi Vukli, Boga, and Nikshi. They are said to descend from the four sons of Kilmeni or Klimenti, who fled with them vaguely "from the north," about thirteen generations ago. Baron Nopcsa states that they moved from the neighbourhood of Gusinje at the beginning of the seventeenth century and settled at Vukli.

They are recognized as an old tribe by the Albanians. The four bairaks are intermarriageable, it having been decided they were sufficiently far removed by now. But in view of the strong feeling against "marrying one's own blood," in other tribes probably, in spite of the tale, there may be other blood in some of them. It has been said that they were different stems, and were gathered into one tribe by Klimenti, a mission priest. Be this as it may, they are some of the finest and most intelligent of the tribesmen.



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Seltzi—three hundred houses, all Catholic—is at the head of the Tsem valley, a lovely spot. It is divided into Djenovich Seltzi, which forms the majority and traces descent from the reputed ancestor Kilmeni, and the Rabijenovich Seltzi, which is of another stock, and some say is related to a tribe near Rijeka in Montenegro (? Tzrmnitza).

Vukli lies at the other source of the Tsem and consisted of ninety-four families, all Catholic.

Boga is at the head of the Proni Thaat, above Skreli. Seventy-five families, all Catholic. Boga intermarries much with Thethi. Nikshi, one hundred and fifty-four houses, almost all Moslem, lies between Boga and Vukli. All these people winter on the plains near Scutari to feed their flocks. They, too, have suffered much from the new frontier, which was purposely drawn by the Montenegrins so as to cut the road and make their journeys to the plain and town very difficult. Montenegro and the Serbs hoped thus to force Klimenti to fall into their hands, and the authorities sent by the Powers to delimit frontiers were too ignorant of the manner of life of the people to see into the matter. So-called "strategical" frontiers, drawn heedless of economic needs, are more likely to promote war than to prevent it.

6. *Lohe*, or *Lohja*, a small tribe of one bairak, consisting of eighty Moslem and forty Catholic houses. Of mixed descent from Shlaku and Pulati. Probably families flowed down into this more fertile district not far from the lake when Serb rule broke up, for "Loho" and its mills are mentioned in 1348 by Stefan Dushan among the districts which are given to the Church.

7. *Rechi*, a small Moslem tribe, gives same tale of origin as *Lohja*; and has also a few houses of "Anas."

8. *Rioli*, on the river, obviously takes its name from *rivulus*, another memento of Roman days. It is all Catholic. The cloth-fulling mills still clack on the river, and perhaps stand in the same place as some of those given away by Dushan. Like *Rechi-Lohja*, it is of mixed descent. These eight tribes form the *Maltsia e Madhe* group.

There are also on the shores of the lake two small Moslem tribes, *Kopliku* and *Grizha*. *Kopliku* as "Kopelnik" is also one of the places mentioned in Tsar Dushan's list. Between *Kopliku* and *Scutari* is the only Serb village of the whole district, *Vraka*, which derives its name from the Saints *Vrachi*: The Healers, SS. Cosmo and Damian, to whom the church was dedicated. *Vraka* had a thousand inhabitants, who all trace descent from various Bosnians, Herzegovinese, and Montenegrins, who in recent times fled from blood-vengeance and sheltered in Turkish territory. Far from being grateful for shelter they are a perpetual source of trouble. They are used by the Serbs as a "jumping-off ground" for complaints, and though they have their own Church

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and priests, which have not been interfered with, the Yugoslav Government has tried to plant a Serb bishop in Scutari on their behalf. They should be exchanged for some Albanians in Serb territory. The whole of the Maltsia e Madhe district is included in the diocese of Scutari.

There is a sprinkling of Serb place-names in the district, but most of them are Albanized, showing how, on the retreat of Serb rule, the older race reasserted itself.

#### 3. THE PULATI GROUP

Polati, Pilot, Pulati occurs as the name of a large mountain district and as a bishopric at an early date.<sup>1</sup> In 877 a bishop of Polati is mentioned by the Council of Delmitano. Then Pope Alexander II, in a letter written to the Archbishop of Antivari in 1062, puts Pulati and its bishop under his care. Towards the end of that century Antivari, owing doubtless to the growing power of the Serbs, ceased to be an archbishopric, though it was still a bishopric, and Pulati is mentioned by Callixtus II in 1121 as under the Archbishop of Ragusa. In 1251 the Archbishopric of Antivari was restored, and Pulati again mentioned as under Antivari. Between 1372 and 1421 is a gap in which Farlati tells us that Helena, widow of Stefan Dushan, and her son, Urosh, "vexed most bitterly the Catholics, and spoiled them of their goods, and reduced them to extreme poverty." No bishop is then mentioned. The Church was kept alive by the Franciscans, who faced danger and hardship in the mountains. Again, under the Turks, extreme misery is mentioned, and bishops are intermittent. It was reported that here were then still some twenty thousand Catholics. But, in spite of missionary effort, the Church almost lapsed. In 1653 Marcus Crisius traversed Pulati and reported: "It is incredible how ignorant the people now are of religion." Up till 1520 there were two bishoprics, Pulatenses Majores, and Pulatenses Minores. To Pulati Minor bishops were appointed from 1345 to 1520; then the two dioceses were united. It appears that it was hard to find men to accept the post, and some of those who did, broke down under the difficulties. Thus Bishop Serafinus, who learnt Albanian and worked very hard, had to retire through illness. Even though the Church of St. Nikola, at Ghoanni, "was rebuilt in 1703 more elegantly and larger and is called a cathedral," it was a humble enough edifice.

In *Illyricum Sacrum* (1817) a contemporary account mentions that Pulati is in the deepest recesses of the roughest mountains; that it

<sup>1</sup> *Acta et Diplomata Res Albanicæ Illustrantia*, and Farlati.





PLATE II.—WOMEN OF SHALA



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includes five districts or parishes, Sciossi, Kiri, Planti, and Givagni, that the territory of Shala is also in Pulati, and that "in it are the vestiges of an ancient city called Mauricum and the remains of seventeen sacred edifices, of which one was said to have belonged to the Benedictines." Mention is also made of the tribes of Salza (now Seltzi), Toplana, and Duscman (Dushmani), all of which still exist, and of "Blachia," not now identifiable. All the above-mentioned, we are told, "faithfully cultivate the Catholic faith. Like the Klementi and others of the mountain folk, they are free from Turkish servitude and free from all Turkish taxes." We thus see clearly that under their own clergy they occupied the same position as did Montenegro under its clergy. The popular tale that Montenegro alone resisted absorption by the Turk is not true.

The Montenegrin tribes, owing to the continuous support of Russia, however, obtained recognition, and were enabled to establish a ruling family, whereas the Albanian tribes, divided into several dioceses and with no leading Albanian family, did not succeed in forming an organic whole.

Pulati is difficult to define, as the limits of the diocese of Pulati extend farther than the district called Pulati by the people. Lower Pulati includes four tribes:—

1. *Plani*.—A Catholic tribe of one bairak, and consists of three stocks, which are intermarriageable and trace descent from Klementi, Merturi, and from the "Anas" (ancient population).

2. *Ghoanni*.—A small Catholic tribe of whose origin I have no information. The Bishop of Pulati has his humble residence in this tribe land.

3. *Mgula*.—Also a small Catholic tribe.

4. *Kiri* traces descent from two stocks—one from Kuchi, the other from Ipek. It is Catholic.

The other tribes of the diocese of Pulati, in what is called Upper Pulati, are:—

1. *Shala*.—A large tribe which played much part in Albania's struggle for independence, occupies all the upper part of the valley of the river Shala, and reaches to the summits of the mountains, which form the watershed on either side. Shala consists of four bairaks which all descend from a common ancestor. Shala, Shoshi, and part of Mirdita tell that they descend from three brothers, who fled from eastward, presumably from Kosovo, when it was overrun by the Turks some time in the fifteenth century. One had a saddle ("shala" in Albanian); the second a winnowing sieve ("shoshi"), and the third had nothing, so he said "Mir dit" (Good day) and went off. Shala, Shoshi, and three bairaks of Mirdita, being thus consanguineous, do not intermarry. Shala tells that when its ancestor arrived there were already small,



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dark people inhabiting the land, with whom they intermarried. Eight houses near Abate, in lower Shala, trace descent from these old inhabitants. The rest of them migrated to Dechani. The Albanians I saw at Dechani in 1903 were certainly all of the small dark type.

Shala consists of four bairaks: Thethi, Petsaj, Lothaj, and Lekaj. The three latter are said to have separated into three groups 376 years ago (told me in 1908). Lothaj and Lekaj recently decided they were far enough removed to be intermarriageable. But Shoshi and Mirdita still would not marry with them.

The bairak of Thethi consists of 180 houses. In these mountains a "house" is far more numerous than in the Maltsia e Madhe. Large communal "houses" still exist, of as many as thirty or forty persons. Thethi is self-governing, and, in fact, is practically a separate tribe. It clings strongly to exogamy, and does not intermarry at all within the tribe, nor does Petsaj. Thethi marries almost entirely with Boga, and this, continued through many generations, has made the Thethi differ somewhat in physical type from the rest of Shala.

2. *Shoshi*.—Origin as above. It lies south of Shala, on the right bank of Shala river. The rock of Lek Dukagin is in Shoshi territory. Shala and Shoshi reckon themselves as "Dukagini," former subjects, that is, of the now extinct chieftain family of Dukagin. Shoshi and Shala are entirely Catholic.

3. *Toplana*.—This was a very wild tribe and had the highest record for blood-vengeance of all the Christian tribes. It is situated in very rugged mountains difficult of access. Toplana told me it was "very old." Baron Nopcsa traced pedigrees to 1450, and considers that about that time it came in to its present site from Vasojevitch. Vasojevitch is known to have shifted its ground from somewhere near Focha in the Herzegovina to Medun, near Podgoritza, and thence to its present site. In one of these shifts it probably drove Toplana out.

The whole district occupied by the above seven tribes is often called Maltsia e Vogel, the little mountains. Also included in the diocese of Pulati is:—

4. *Nikaj*.—Here I was told that the tribe is mainly an offshoot from the Moslem tribe of Krasnichi, which, as we have seen, is brother to Hoti. Nikol, the ancestor, left Krasnichi while that tribe was still Christian, and Nikaj is all Catholic. One hundred houses of Nikaj, the Tsuraj, trace descent from a daughter of Nikol, who bore an illegitimate child by a cut-eared gipsy ("tsurrue," to cut or mark the ears). This is the only case of female descent I heard of. The cut ear suggests that the gipsy had been mutilated as a punishment and had fled to the mountains. The Nikaj people are dark and are a wild lot. Gipsy blood is possible.

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Baron Nopcsa considers the ancestor Nikol to have been brother and not son to Krasan.

### THE PUKA GROUP

This is sometimes reckoned a large tribe of seven bairaks. Sometimes as a group of tribes.

It is an important group, as here are the oldest of all the population. Much is probably of indigenous origin with little immigration.

1. *Berisha-Merturi*.—The Berisha people state that they have always been in their present homeland. They formerly, says Nopcsa, occupied more, but were driven from Ibalja by the Thachi. With great patience the Baron traced some very extensive pedigrees with certainty back to 1370, and with probability to 1270, an extraordinarily detailed piece of oral tradition. Merturi split off from Berisha eleven generations ago. Even in the days when the district was included in the Serb Empire we find no Slav names in these pedigrees, and only two, Sokol (falcon) and Uk (wolf), occur later. As above mentioned, both Gruda and Kuchi also trace descent in part from Berisha. I would particularly direct ethnologists to this region before it is penetrated and broken up by roads.

Merturi, I was told, was an ancient Roman name "Merituri," but I have not traced it. That the Romans had a route through the district is shown by the place-names "Valbona" and "Apripa." Berisha-Merturi is all Catholic.

2. *Cheriti*.—Part Catholic, part Moslem. These people also stated that they were "very old," but I have no particulars.

3. *Komani*.—Catholic. In this tribe land are the ruins and the ancient graveyard known as Kalja Dalmaches, or tower of the Dalmatians, which is generally considered to be the remains of the Illyrian tribe of the Delmates or Dalmates, driven from the coast by the Romans. The present inhabitants seem to have no tradition of descent from these people, and no tradition, in fact, about them at all, so are clearly later immigrants.

The name Komani occurs also for a district in Montenegro, not far from Podgoritza. One is tempted to connect it with the Cumans or Komans, who were used as hired troops by various Balkan rulers, especially the Bulgars, in the Middle Ages. But we have no definite tale of their movements.

4. *Chiri*.—All Catholic.

5. *Dushaj*.—Catholic.

6. *Kabashi*.—Moslem. Nopcsa reports they came about 250 years ago to their present site.

7. *Puka*.—All Moslem.

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### THE POSTRIPA GROUP

Postripa is obviously a name bequeathed by the Romans. It consists of five tribes, all included in the Diocese of Pulati. Much of Postripa is Moslem, for it was quarrelled about by several bishops. In 1702 Pope Clement XI, who was of Albanian blood on his mother's side, sent Vicentius Zmajevitch as Visitator Apostolicus, who reported among other lamentable things that three bishops were all claiming Postripa, and that meanwhile the people are left "without leader or shepherd, like a scattered flock subject to oppression and persecution."

In Postripa are included five tribes:—

1. *Mazreku*.—A small Catholic tribe. That the place was in ancient days a centre of civilization is shown by the considerable ruins of an abbey, Shenkol Shati, believed to have belonged to the Benedictines and to be the one mentioned by several ancient writers as not far from Scutari. It is now lost in a tangle of trees and brushwood. There is a strong feeling throughout Albania against felling trees on the spot where a church once existed—a feeling that probably goes back to the very ancient days of sacred groves. The abbey presumably fell into ruin when the Serbs seized the district in the Middle Ages. The hatred of the Serb Orthodox for the Catholics was shown in 1913 in the Balkan War, when the Montenegrin troops, whose object was said to be "to liberate Christians," fell upon the little church of Mazreku, trampled the Host under foot, dressed up in the priestly vestments, danced about, and amused themselves by cutting off the noses from images of the saints and firing bullets into the crucifix.

2. *Drishti*.—A small Moslem tribe that was almost annihilated in 1913 by the Montenegrins. Drishti is the site of the ancient city of Drivasto, in ancient days a bishopric, mentioned as early as 877. The town was entirely destroyed by the Turks, who beheaded the leaders before the walls of Scutari—then too besieged—in order to terrify the Scutarines into submission. The wasted spot was afterwards settled by incomers from the neighbourhood of mixed origin. And in the period when three bishops were quarrelling for Postripa the Drishti folk all turned Moslem.

3. *Shlaku*.—A tribe of one bairak on the right bank of the Drin, in a very poor district. It is all Catholic and traces origin from Toplana (*q.v.*).

4. *Dushmani*.—A Catholic tribe of two bairaks—Temali and Dushmani. Dushmani takes its name from a chieftain family which ruled here. In 1403 "Goranimus, Damianus, and Nenada, brothers Dusmani, Lords of Polati Minor," offer themselves as subjects to Venice and swear fidelity on condition that Venice will guarantee them in possession



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of their lands, which have been attacked by the Turks. Venice, assured of their "fame, probity, and virtues," confirms them in possession of their farms, goods, and all things in the said districts. Venice, in truth, was glad of any tribe that would be a buffer between the Turks and Scutari. The tribe was, I was told, "very old." It numbered 160 houses when I was there.

5. *Summa*.—A mainly Catholic tribe on the right bank of the Kiri. The name occurs in a document of Tsar Dushan, who in 1335 gives to the monastery of Dechani, among other districts, "the Albanian Katun, Tuzi," along with a number of luckless Albanians who are named; "Petrus Suma, Mataguzh (the village of Matagushi was burnt by the Montenegrins in 1912) with his brothers Laz and Prijezda . . . Progon Mira, Marcus Suma, etc." The present Suma tribe states that it comes from Mirdita. But as the Mirdites do not seem to have arrived till early in the fifteenth century, the "Suma" referred to in 1335 must be the elder population. All the above tribes are included in the diocese of Pulati.

### THE MIRDITE GROUP

The Mirdite tribe is the largest of all. It is wholly Catholic. When I was there (1908) it was reckoned as some three thousand houses with an average of ten to a house. It had then an ecclesiastical head—the mitred abbot, Premi Dochi, whose title was derived from a Benedictine abbey, which existed near Oroshi formerly.

It had an hereditary chief, Prenk, son of Bib Doda. The abbot was one of the most remarkable men Albania has produced. His death, near the close of the Great War, has been an irreparable loss; and the death of Prenk Bib Doda, who was killed in a blood feud soon after, deprived the Mirdites of, at any rate, a picturesque figurehead. He left no son, and his next heir, a cousin, Mark Ghoni, displayed such cowardice in 1914, when he fled from the front and said he had come "to fetch vaseline to clean the rifles," that he lost all chance of chieftainship. Poor old Prenk realized that the days of chiefs were passed, and left his property to the Mirdite tribe and not to his relatives, for none, he said, were worthy of leadership. Thus ended the quasi-independence of Mirdita. The tribe consists of five bairaks. The three original ones, Oroshi, Spachi, and Kusneni, trace origin from the brother of the Shala-Shoshi brethren who said "Mir dit" and went off. Being consanguineous, these three bairaks do not intermarry, nor do they marry Shala or Shoshi. The two other bairaks are Fandi, which tells that it formerly was part of the Luria group, but joined the Mirdites when Ljuma turned Moslem (? eighteenth century), and Dibri, which

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must not be confounded with the town of Dibra, and of which I have no information. Both these two bairaks can marry the former three.

I was told by members of the groups that the Mirdite-Shala-Shoshi came from the Pestriku mountains, near Djakova, when the Turks were first pressing westward. Before this emigration they had formed part of the Ipek group of tribes and were all Christian. (There is some reason to believe that at one time the Mirdites were Orthodox.) They further stated that when the Turks took Scutari and were harrying the land they fled back for a time to their old Pestriku mountains, and only returned to their present position some 259 years ago. The name "Mirdite" is of late occurrence—about the middle of the seventeenth century. It is possible that before their second shifting they were known only as Dukagini. Of Lek Dukagin they are extremely proud, and state that the Bijelopavlitchi (sons of White Paul) in Montenegro are descended from his nephew, Pal i bardhe (Paul the White). They declared Skender Beg to have been related to him, and for this reason the Mirdite women wear the black giurdan in mourning for him, worn otherwise only by men.

These three bairaks, Orosho, Spachi, and Kusneni, marry principally with Kthela and Luria.

### KTHELA

In war Kthela marches with Mirdita. These two had the right to lead the tribes to all wars in the South. Hoti led to all wars in the North.

Kthela consists of three bairaks: Kthela, all Catholic; Selati and Perlati, mixed Catholic and Moslem.

## 4. THE WHOLLY MOSLEM TRIBES

These lie for the most part east of the Christian groups, on the more fertile and lower-lying lands. They were reluctant to admit foreigners and averse to being questioned. Since I visited them they have been largely exterminated by the Serbs and Montenegrins, and how much is left of their former strength and number is unknown.

### DIBRA GROUP

1. *Luria*.—Was the head of the group and consisted of one bairak of some two hundred houses, in twenty of which there were some Catholics. In 1908 Mohammedanism was making rapid progress. When Christian, which it was till recently, it married as a rule with



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Mirdita. Since adopting Islam it has married into the two other Moslem tribes of the group, Matija and Dibra.

2. *Matija* is wholly Moslem. It had a very bad reputation when I was travelling in Albania, and was so much averse to foreigners that I did not visit it. It was about the only tribe that refused to accept blood-gelt and insisted on blood, and the more civilized tribes of Maltsia e Madhe used to say: "We are not so bad as Matija." It was notorious for constant cattle-stealing from the herds wintering on the plains and was said to consist of about twelve hundred houses. It has since come before the public, as its chief, Ahmed Zogu, with a large number of armed men at his back, aspired to rule Albania. He was expelled by the Albanians in 1924, but was returned forcibly to the country by the support of Belgrade, and it is said of other Powers, who saw in him a ready tool to assist their schemes. By first giving territory to the Serbs and then great concessions to Italy he has now put Albania into a difficulty, and she has become a bone of contention between Jugoslavia and Italy. In 1908, when all the tribes were eager for an independent Albania, no one could have foreseen its destinies would be thrown into the hands of the wildest and least educated of the tribes.

3. *Dibra*.—This tribe, too, I found unvisitable. It had as bad a reputation as Matija, but has suffered cruelly as a result of war, for the frontier has been drawn between the Dibrani and the town of Dibra, their market. This has caused great discontent both sides of the frontier, and some fighting. A frontier under no circumstances should cut a tribe land in half—if those who draw it wish to maintain peace.

Dibra and Matija formed part of the Principality of Skender Beg in the old days. Luria belonged to Dukagini.

4. *Arnji*.—A small independent tribe on the left bank of the river Mola. It is all Moslem and an offshoot of Berisha. I was the only foreigner who had passed through it for many years, and a long debate was held before I was admitted as guest. The women all wore Mirdite dress, and I was told the tribe married mainly Mirdite women.

### PRIZREN GROUP

1. *Ljuma*.—When I knew it, this was a large and strong Moslem tribe. In 1912-13 it suffered very heavily. A Serb officer in my presence described how he and his battalion had bayoneted all the women and children in part of the tribe, because "women bear men," and laughed till he choked over his beer. The Serbs were "liberating the land from the Turkish yoke." On subsequent inquiry I learnt that some 1,400 persons had been massacred. Part of this tribe is now under Serb rule.

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Along with Ljuma were grouped Bruti, Mal i zi (the Black Mountain, not to be confounded with Montenegro), Rechi, Vlas, and some other small groups—all offshoots of older tribes, especially of Shala and the Fandi bairak of Mirdita.

### DJAKOVA GROUP

1. *Gashi*.—All Moslem. About eight hundred houses. I did not visit it.

2. *Hashi*.—A very large tribe of, it was said, about a thousand houses, almost all Moslem. They had never seen a woman in European dress, and were greatly amused at my arrival armed only with an umbrella. They occupy the Pestriku mountains, traditionally a former home of the Mirdites. They were hospitable and allowed me to pass through their land, but were so unused to foreigners and so afraid that their admission might bring about foreign annexation that I asked no questions about origin or anything personal.

3. *Tropopoja*.—Three hundred Moslem houses—I did not visit. The town of Djakova was founded by an offshoot of the Merturi-Berisha, and I was told derives its name from St. Jak (St. Giacomo), and that its founders were Christians. But when I visited it almost the whole of its large population was Moslem. There was a small Catholic church and school. Except for one hundred Serb families the town was solid Albanian. Two stocks claimed descent from the original founders: the Merturi and the Vula. The Vula was a large and powerful family, and I was told I could travel anywhere safely with a Vula as guide. I did so. He carried no weapon.

A large number of villages surround Djakova. These I found to be all Albanian, tracing descent from Berisha, Shala, Fandi, and other bairaks of Mirdita, as do many inhabitants of the town. None intermarry with their tribe of origin. The villages were mixed Catholic and Moslem. There were no Serb villages. The district is now part of Yugoslavia, and the population doubtless much changed by immigration and emigration.

### IPEK GROUP

1. *Ipek* (now called Petch) and its villages.—A large Albanian population of many stocks flowed down from the mountains when the Serbs evacuated it in 1640 and reoccupied the lands formerly taken from their ancestors.

Some villages traced origin from Berisha and Shala. Dechani was populated by descendants of the ancient Shala stock (*q.v.*). This

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district, too, is now part of Jugoslavia, and has suffered much at the hands of Serb and Montenegrin. The lands are being colonized by Serbs. Many Albanians have fled into Albania.

2. *Gusinje*.—This, in all probability, descends from some of the last of the Bosniaks who trekked south. Though largely Serbophone, the pre-war Gusinians were so violently anti-Serb that when the Treaty of Berlin awarded them to Montenegro they resisted annexation so fiercely that the plan was dropped. Terrible vengeance was taken for this by the Montenegrins in 1913 and the Serbs in 1919. Men, women, and children were mercilessly slaughtered. Some thousands fled to Scutari for protection. A British force was there then. So greatly had these refugees suffered that they preferred to die of fever in the Scutari swamps to returning to Gusinje, where, as they said, the Serbs had thrown down food to attract a crowd of hungry children and had then thrown a bomb into the midst of them.

But the Powers permitted the Serbs to keep the district. The advent of the Serb has, in fact, reproduced the conditions of the Middle Ages, when the Turks advanced. I note the facts in order to enable an observer fifty or more years hence to learn how much of an original population is wiped out or absorbed by a conqueror.

3. *Plava*.—I did not visit, as it was opposed to admitting strangers. I was told by old Marash Hutzi, of Hoti, that part of Plava derived from Hoti, but that part was of very old stock called Pagani; but he did not know if Pagani were Moslems or Catholics. "Pagani," or "Paganezi," occurs as a proper name in some Durazzo and Ragusa documents of the thirteenth century. Possibly it was a usual term for "country people" among those of the coast and the towns who spoke a Latin dialect. The "Pagani" of Plava may be an "island" of an ancient population, e.g. Vlah.

To sum up briefly, the present tribes of Albania are in all probability mainly descended from the pre-Slav Balkan inhabitants. In the Serb Empire the herdsmen were recognized as Vlah and Albanian. A very large proportion of the Albanian mountains were, as we have seen, given along with their inhabitants to Serbian monasteries. Under Turkish rule the power of the monasteries naturally dwindled rapidly, and the Albanian serfs, more especially as they were largely, if not entirely, Catholic, would as rapidly break loose from servitude.

That the refugees who came into these mountains later were also of the herdsmen class there is little reason to doubt. They came with their flocks, and are to this day strictly pastoral.

As we shall see in studying the Montenegrin tribes, the ultimate fate of these refugees has been largely influenced by whether they settled in land which was under the Orthodox Church, or whether



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they penetrated yet farther into the Albanophone and Catholic Albanian mountains. In the latter case they have remained Albanian; in the former they have been Serbized, and have also acquired doubtless some Slav blood. That the Vlah (Roman-Illyrian) forms a considerable part of the present Albanian inhabitants is indicated by Brocardus's reference to "Latini" and Farlati's to "Blachia."

### 5. THE TRIBES OF MONTENEGRO UP TO 1913

The tribes of Montenegro, as they existed up to the beginning of the Great War, have not been recorded in English. I therefore describe them in some detail, for they are the last example of the development of a wholly tribal nation into a State in Europe. I say the last because the tribal system of Albania had disappeared, save in the Northern mountains, long before Albania became independent. When I first went to Montenegro in 1900 it consisted of about thirty tribes. I say "about," for some were recent compounds and not, strictly speaking, tribes.

Montenegro was divided into two parts—Montenegro and the Brda. The first was old Montenegro with some additions on the Herzegovinian side; the second, the mountain mass that borders on Albania. The real "plemé" (tribe) in each consisted of a group of people believing itself to be descended from a common male ancestor. In some cases there was a tale of some previous inhabitants, and in others of later settlers who had been admitted as part of the tribe. I regret that I did not collect the tale of ancestry of each tribe instead of the details of a few, but these will serve to show how a tribe was formed and developed.

Each tribe till recently was exogamous, except when the tribe descended from two or more separate stocks, which were then inter-marriageable. Male blood alone counted.

Each tribe was divided into several "bratstvos" (groups of brothers literally) consisting of many cousins and brothers, each calling the other "brother" or "sister." In my time a bratstvo was not reckoned farther than and including second cousins; but in former days it extended farther. When I first lived in my guide's, Krsto's, hovel at Njegushi, I was amazed at the number of his brothers. The neighbours were equally surprised by my narrow idea of a "brother." When I said I believed I had cousins whom I had never seen and whose names I did not know, all were horrified and said the English were no better than dogs. They could not understand a bratstvo that did not live on its own patch of ground. Scattering over the world they thought

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weakened the bratstvo greatly, and might lead to great difficulties, for marriage within the bratstvo was a great sin—some still objected to marriage within the tribe—and if people left their land and descendants returned later, terrible things might happen if relationship were

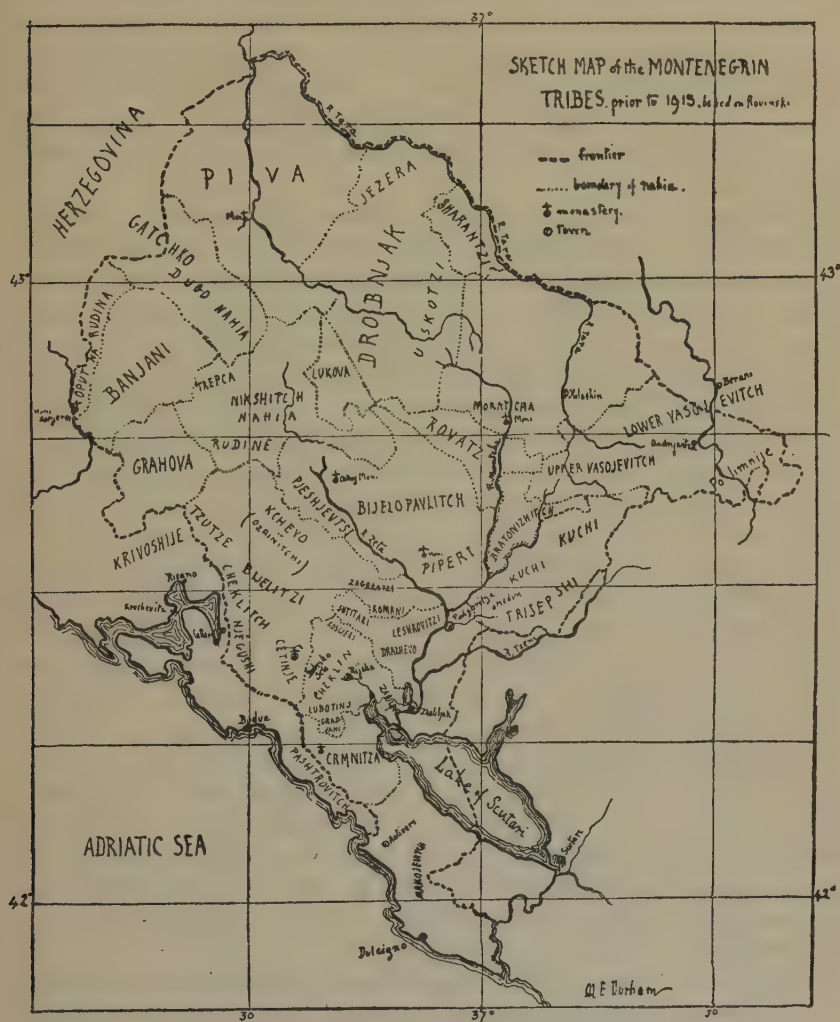


FIG. 2.—SKETCH MAP OF MONTENEGRIN NATIONS AND TRIBES IN 1913

not traced. For example, a young man had lately so returned, and had been engaged to a girl with full consent of her parents. The marriage day was fixed, when it was discovered that the bride was the bridegroom's second cousin once removed, and the marriage was forbidden.



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To make matters safe, another young man was at once found and the girl married to him. The bereaved youth left the country and had not returned. Thus, as Pope Gjuro, Krsto's brother, explained, you see the folly of separating a bratstvo. But for the care taken by the bride's family, incest would have been committed. The idea of complete exogamy was not dead. Many thought it far better to marry into a distant tribe. Church law (which forbids marriage of second cousins) had not, in fact, been in force much more than fifty years, and even groups told by the Church that they were marriageable were withheld by tribal instinct. The marriage of even third cousins was held a low-class affair.

Each bratstvo was known by the name of a distinguished ancestor who had founded it in antiquity. Most "plemena" (tribes) had a bratstvo esteemed peculiarly noble which provided the tribe's leading men. The head of each bratstvo was the Knezh. In the old days each tribe had a serdar, a voyvoda, and a bariaktar (standard-bearer, a word of Turkish origin). Each bratstvo consisted of a number of "houses." The head of a house was Domachin, or Stareshin. These leading men were called "glavari" (heads). Nominally the posts were elective—a fact on which the Montenegrins prided themselves. Practically the electors were the other glavari. They co-opted the new member and usually chose the eldest son of the late "head." He was passed over only in case of known incompetence. Cowardice in fight was a complete bar. Roast sheep and bread and wine were provided. The "heads" invited the young man to the feast. The eldest headman took the young man by the sash and swung him round three times, crying: "Come, son, to thy father's place." Gun-firing, feasting, and drinking ended the ceremony.

In old days possibly power was sometimes seized by force, but in practice most of the leading posts are said to have been held for many generations by certain families. It was rare for a family voluntarily to relinquish headship. I found but one noteworthy case recorded. In the middle of the eighteenth century the Vukotiches of Kchevo gave up the important post of Guvernador (Civil Governor of Montenegro) to the Radonitches of Njegushi—for what reason I could not learn. We thus see a tribal people who, theoretically, had communal self-government and free election, but actually ruling families had developed.

### THE TRIBES

I. Katunski Nahia, the core of old Montenegro, contains seven tribes.

1. *Njegushi*.—When I lived with this tribe it was proud of being that of the reigning family—the Petrovitches—and of owning the Lovchen

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mountain, on whose slopes no Turk had ever set foot—an impregnable stronghold. In 1905 we little knew the crash that would take place ten years later.

Njegushi is named from a mountain of that name in the Herzegovina, from which the first refugee, Punosh, came with his family and flocks about the middle of the fifteenth century, and was allowed to settle in Dugi Do (the long valley), which lies below the road from Njegushi to Cetinje, on the right-hand side, by the Tzrnojevitches, who owned it.

When I was living in Krsto's hut in Dugi Do there were fifty-eight Punoshevitch houses, mostly one- or two-roomed, roughly-built stone huts with roofs either thatched or covered with slabs of stone. Their owners all traced direct descent from Punosh and knew the names of their direct ancestors. So far as I learnt, there had been no emigration worth mentioning. Thus the increase in something over four hundred years had not been great. Blood-feuds, frontier fighting, and heavy infant mortality would sufficiently account for this.

The Punoshevitches, in the course of time, had differentiated into a number of bratstvos, which in recent years had been declared inter-marriageable. Eight houses were still called Punoshevitch. The Bogdanovitches were a large bratstvo. Krsto belonged to the Pejovitches. Being the son of a priest, his full name was Krsto Popov Pejovitch, of Njegushi. He was very proud of being a Punoshevitch. Njegushi, he said, was the best plemé in Montenegro, and Punoshevitch the best bratstvo. I asked which was the second best plemé and was told Vasojevitch. "Why?" asked I. "I married my sister to one," said he naïvely.

As the tribal system has decayed, the bratstvo name has become the surname, except in some instances, where the sons of a distinguished father have taken his Christian name permanently as surname, or a nickname has been adopted.

Local tradition told that when Punosh arrived the present plain of Njegushi was a lake, but that the water broke through underground, and the small waterfall on the way down to Cattaro is its present exit. It is possible, for this limestone area is riddled with subterranean caverns, and the present plain is a mass of rounded, water-worn pebbles. The old houses are all built not on the plain but on the mountain slopes, and this, too, was offered as proof that there was a lake there of old. But in such countries flat cultivable land would have been too valuable to build on in the old days. In Dugi Do all the huts were built on slabs of native rock, and the pockets of earth in between used as potato and cabbage patches.

The houses now on Njegushi plain are all modern, built since the road was made in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The "hotel"

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was made, while I was there, out of the hard-earned profits made by smuggling tobacco into Austria.

When Punosh arrived there were already inhabitants on the Lovchen, for it was part of the "bashtina" (hereditary land) of the Tzrnojevitches (*v.* section on Serbian law), and herdsmen of Vlah or Albanian origin lived there. Stefan Tzrnojevitch is said first to have allowed refugees to settle there in the fifteenth century.

Two brothers, Jerak and Raitch, who were of the same blood as Punosh, soon followed him along with their families and settled on the slopes of the Lovchen. The bulk of the plemé in my time was formed of their descendants. They, too, had broken into various bratstvos, the chief one being the Petrovitches of the Jerakovitch line, who first as "Vladikas" (bishops) and then as Princes played the leading part in Montenegro for many generations. They, in truth, made Montenegro, and with them it fell.

The Radonitches, who for a few generations were their rivals and held the civil post of Guvernador, fell in 1823. They belonged to the bratstvo Raitchovitch. The struggle between the ecclesiastical power and the civilian was, therefore, a struggle for supremacy between two rival branches of the same family group.

Last arrived the Vrbitzas, who were given land along the old Cattaro frontier. Their name, which means "willow," suggests that they came from the plains. But all three groups—Punosh, Jerak-Raitch, and Vrbitza—asserted that they had come from the Njegushi mountains between Trebinje and Nikshitch. A further tradition told that they had earlier fled from near Sjenitzza in Bosnia, and on the advance of the Turks into the Herzegovina had trekked again. Jirecek states that the earliest documentary mention of them that he has found is 1435. The first settlers on the Lovchen were probably heads of large "houses," and came with a big following. Being herdsmen they were used to trekking in a mass. All herdsmen in the days of the Serbian Empire were serfs. When that Empire fell it is highly probable that the herdsmen hastened away with as many of their over-lords' flocks as they could collect.

In course of time this Njegushi tribe, with its two powerful bratstvos, Petrovitch and Radonitch, became by far the strongest. The tribes next in importance were those with whom the Petrovitches chose to intermarry. Thus, the Vukotitches of Kchevo, the Plamenatz of Tzrmnitza, and the Gjurashkovitches of Rijeka Nahia at times became formidable.

A "friend" in our sense of the word was then unknown. A "priatelj" (the only word to translate "friend") was one connected either by marriage or by "kumstvo" (sponsorship). Such relationship implied an alliance both defensive and offensive. It is easy to see that by such



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means a ruling caste can soon develop in a group of so-called autonomous and communistic tribes.

Among the few remaining Royal Families of Europe the idea of forming offensive and defensive alliances by means of marriage is not yet extinct.

Powerful allies are apt to become dangerous rivals. The Petrovitches combated them more than once successfully. Njegushi was the ruling tribe of Montenegro till overthrown by the Great Powers at Versailles.

Such was the making of a European tribe. The other tribes had traditions on similar lines, which I will give briefly.

2. *Cheklitch*.—Immigrants from Bosnia by tradition. According to Jirecek first mentioned in 1381. Said to have derived their name from St. Thekla, the patron saint of the tribe, and to have been Catholic, which suggests a non-Serbian origin.

3. *Bijelitzi*.—First mentioned, according to Jirecek, in 1430. They did not move to their present position in Katunski Nahia till some time in the eighteenth century. A ballad in *Ogledalo Srbsko* of 1798 represents Vladika Petar I saying: "As thou mayst know, it is not long since I settled the Tsutsi and Bijelitzi . . . on the wide plains of Treshnjevo. Now news comes that they are fighting each other around the plain. Haste upon thy heroic feet and make peace between them."

4. *Tsutsi* came from the Herzegovina in 1798. Their most famed bratstvo was Krivokapitch (crooked cap), one of whom has lately been shot by the Serbs for leading revolution against them.

5. *Kchevo* or *Ozrinitch*.—First mentioned in 1416. It took its name from an heroic Ozro. Its most noted bratstvo is Vukotitch, which for a time held the post of Guvernador and intermarried with the Petrovitches. The late Queen Milena of Montenegro was a Vukotitch of Kchevo.

6. *Zagaratzi*. 7. *Komani*.—Of these two I have no information. A district called Komani exists also in North Albania.

These seven tribes form Katunski Nahia—that is, the district of the herdsmen. "Katun" is a word said to be of Vlah origin, akin to the "canton" of Switzerland. It is not Slavonic; and is the usual name for upland dwelling-places in Albania. Together with Rijeka Nahia it formed part of the Tzrnojevitch "Bashtina."

II. *Rijeka Nahia*.—(1) Cheklinitzi, of whose origin I have no record; a large tribe. (2) Kosijeri, a small one with a lively history. In the early nineteenth century they left the Herzegovina and refuged in Montenegro. The Bijelitzi let them settle upon their land, and then so maltreated them that they begged the Rijeka Nahia to shelter them. The Cheklinitzi offered them land and they accepted. The Bijelitzi thereupon flew to arms and called on Katunski Nahia to help them to fight for

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possession of the Kosijeri. The battle was about to begin when Perovitch, a Moslem of the Tsutsi tribe of Katunski Nahia, called to Serdar Jovo Gjurashkovitch of Rijeka: "Two words with you, in God's name! Here are we two Nahias about to fight for the Kosijeri, who are not worth four loads of charcoal. 'Tis sin and folly!" A council was called. It was proved the Kosijeri had fled from the oppression of the Bijelitz. They were, therefore, allowed to settle on the land offered by the Cheklinitzi and form a new plemé. "Kosijer" means a reaping hook. They were possibly a group of agricultural labourers who had fled from a Moslem overlord. The monastery Kosijerevo indicates their former district.

The other plemena of Rijeka are: (3) Lubotinj; (4) Gradjani; (5) Dobrosko Selo; (6) Zhabljak, that is, "the place of frogs." It lies in marshes near the head of the Lake of Scutari. In old days it was headquarters of the Tzrnojevitch family, who owned much of the plain and all the mountains between the plain and Cattaro. Rijeka Nahia is named from a small river whose full name is Rijeka Tzrnojevitcha—the river of the Tzrnojevitches. A brief account of the Tzrnojevitches may be fitly given here.

### 6. THE TZRNOJEVITCHES

When Stefan Dushan, Tsar of Serbia, died in 1356, his quickly built empire broke up with similar speed; each feudal chief quarrelled with his neighbour for power and land. The Balsha family, whose origin is obscure and who were possibly Vlahs, made themselves independent lords of a large part of Albania, fought Venice for the coast lands, and fought the Tzrnojevitches for the plains of the Zeta and the lands beyond. The Tzrnojevitches in turn fought anyone from whom land and plunder could be gained, and sided with anyone likely to be a lucrative ally. The Tzrnojevitches in old documents are also called Gjurassevitch, and are referred to in such a manner as to suggest they were at least partly of Albanian origin.

In 1403 the Ragusans addressed a letter to Nikola Topia, an Albanian chief, in the Latin dialect then in use on the coast, for the purpose of enlisting Albanian chiefs and men to serve against Bosnia. "Free authority is given to our captains generally to treat with Jurassevich and the other Albanians."

In 1404 there is mention of "Zernovich called Giurazy." This is clearly Albanian and is either Gjur-i-zi (George the Black), or derives from Gurizi (Black Rock), near Scutari. In Serb "son of the black" becomes Tzrnojevitch. Being apparently natives of this partly Slav,



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partly Albanian district of the Zeta, they may have been of mixed blood themselves. The Albanian name was dropped and the Serbian one retained, but none of these chiefs had a sense of nationality. The Tzrnojevitches made no effort to unite with the Serbs. They fought only to keep or enlarge their own lands. Thus seven years after Kosovo, Raditch Tzrnojevitch appears as rival to George Strasimir Balsha and died fighting him, instead of combining with him against the oncoming Turks.

Though much use has been made of the Battle of Kosovo for recent political propaganda, it had at the time little or no effect on the surviving feudal lords. The removal of one local chief made it easier for others to extend their domains. After Kosovo no local chief troubled about the Turk, unless his own land was attacked, or he could enlist the Turk against his rival next door; and he was ready to serve with Venice or Ragusa if it paid him. Thus the Tzrnojevitches, being "in blood" with the Balshas, George and Ljesh Tzrnojevitch at first made friends with Ragusa. They then took service with Stefan Lazarevitch, son of Tsar Lazar, who now ruled what was left of Serbia under Turkish suzerainty, and on his death offered themselves to Venice. George Tzrnojevitch had three sons, Goichin, Gjurasin, and Stefanitza. These quarrelled with the Serbs and sided with Venice and Ragusa against George Brankovitch, who had succeeded Kral Stefan as ruler of Serbia, and tried to take land from him.

Thus at this early date it is clear that Montenegro had no desire for union with Serbia. As all three of George's sons soon quarrelled, the fortunes of Stefanitza alone concern us. He played for his own hand first as ally of Duke Stipan of the Herzegovina; then of the Venetians; then for a short time of George Brankovitch of Serbia, and finally, as one of the most faithful allies of Venice, was Kapetan and Voyvoda of the Zeta as paid servant of the Venetian Republic.

Stefanitza possessed as hereditary "Bashtina" the lands between the gulf of Cattaro and the Lake of Scutari. Venice, wishing to make her frontier safe, did all possible to buy Stefanitza's good will; obtained the liberation of his son, Ivan, whom the Herzegovinians held for some years as hostage for his father's good behaviour; supported him against his elder brothers and their sons; and recognized as his "all the katuni and lands he has taken from his brothers and may take from them." Stefanitza flew the banner of St. Mark and helped Venice to destroy the last remaining power of Serbia on the Adriatic. The Tzrnojevitches were recognized as rebels against Serb rule; and so they were. They wanted independence and fought Serbs, Herzegovinians, and Turks impartially. Medun, the old fortress above Podgoritza, was held by the Serbs till 1455. Nikshitch belonged to Duke

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Stipan of the Herzegovina. The rest of Stefanitza's territory marched with the Albanian tribes, with whom he seems to have been on better terms than with the Serbs, for he married the sister of the great Skender Beg, and, though the youngest brother, obtained all the lands of his brethren.

He was succeeded by his son, Ivan, in 1465. By then the Turks had taken Medun and were uncomfortably near. Like his father, Ivan joined the Venetians, and was made by them Kapetan of the Upper Zeta, with a salary of 12,000 ducats and residence at Zhabljak. When the Turks attacked Scutari (1474) Ivan and his men came to its aid, and so did the gallant Albanian tribe Hoti, famed as one of the bravest. Along with Ivan they harried the Turks at Drivasto. Sad, indeed, that this brave tribe with a long record of courage should have been pitilessly handed over by the Powers to Slav rule in 1913, in spite of its earnest prayers.

The Turks, furious with Ivan for intervening, burnt his residence at Zhabljak. Scutari fell after a long siege. Numbers of the huge stone cannon-balls then used were dug up when the new road at the foot of the hill was made in 1910.

The Venetians made terms and withdrew from Scutari. Ivan, with a crowd of Slavs and Albanians, fled with them to Italy, and at the celebrated church of Loreto he solemnly vowed to build a church to the Virgin should he ever regain his lands. This shows he was not a fanatical member of the Orthodox Church.

The Zeta, ecclesiastically as well as racially, was a debatable ground. It was under the Archbishop of Antivari and thus part of the Patriarchate of Rome. But there was also an Orthodox Metropolitan of the Zeta.

Two years passed. Then Sultan Mahomed II died and his sons, Bajazet and Djem, fought for the throne. Had the Balkan people at this moment of confusion been capable of combining, they might have broken Turkish power. No such attempt was made, but Ivan Tzrnovitch and Lek Dukagin (the Albanian leader) both seized the chance of returning to their homelands. Ivan asked help of Venice, but got none. His return was not opposed by the Turks, but he had to become a vassal of the Turks and accept the title of "beg" (or "bey"), and as Ivan Beg the Montenegrin peasant still knows him. Venetian records call him "Turkish subject and standard-bearer." The Turks retained the plains and Zhabljak. Ivan had to live on the "katun" land of the Lovchen, where he founded Cetinje, and, to fulfil his vow at Loreto, built the monastery and established there the Metropolitan of the Zeta, who was among the refugees from the plains—a fact which made the church, vowed at Loreto, Orthodox instead of Catholic. He endowed

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the church with part of his lands—the Lovchen and certain vineyards.

He formed a small court on Serbian lines, with officials whose titles were Byzantine (Kefaliije, Logothete), and adapted to his needs the Canon of Stefan Dushan, but had to make many changes, for the autonomous tribes grew in power and feudal usage, and Serbian law shrank rapidly and disappeared. The feudal system had been imposed by the conquering Serb, and when the Serb lord was broken ancient tribal usage revived.

Ivan now had the Venetians as neighbours, who described him as “*homo de animo inquieto et scandaloso*,” and paid him a salary not to invade their land. In 1489 they complained to the Sultan that Ivan had cut the trade route and burnt a village on their land, and the Sultan commanded him to pay reparation. Ivan died in 1490. His son, George, succeeded him, and was permitted by the Sultan to marry a Venetian wife, possibly in order to stop the inconvenient quarrels between Venice and the Tzrnojevitches. Ivan left two other sons, Stefan and Stanisha. Stanisha turned Moslem, and for some years lived in Constantinople on good terms with the Sultan.

Stefan complained to the Turks of his brother George. The Turks suspected him of plotting with a foreign Power, and ordered him out of the country. He fled to Venice and Stefan at once took his place, but only as nominal ruler, for the land was put under Feriz Pasha of Scutari. Feriz very soon removed Stefan to Scutari, where he entered a monastery and died a monk. The Turks made use of the growing hatred of the peasants for their lords, and so got possession of the salt works and some land near Cattaro. No rising in favour of the Tzrnojevitches is recorded as having taken place, but George returned to Montenegro in 1500 and made submission to the Turks. Feriz Pasha promptly sent him to Constantinople, where he was graciously received and given lands in Anatolia, where he lived and died. It was about this time that the name of “Montenegro” was first given. In ancient maps the district appears as part of Albania.

Both his brothers being cleared off, Stanisha the Moslem returned to the family lands as Turkish governor. He was made sanjak of Montenegro and lord of the land of Diokletia. A Turkish kadi acted as judge. He kept up friendly correspondence with his relatives in Venice, and his letters are extant in the Vienna archives. He died childless, and Montenegro was again made part of the district of Scutari.

The Turks gave the administration of all the Christians' local affairs to their bishops. The Vladika of Montenegro was thus in no unusual position. He was exceptional in one respect only: serfs upon the lands of a monastery belonged to it. The men on the Lovchen were given



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along with the land to the monastery by Ivan, and certain dues could thus be exacted from them, both of labour and tribute. This gave rise to the tale of "Prince Bishops." In fact, the tribes ruled themselves by tribe law, and the Vladika's authority was shadowy and enforced mainly by fear of his curse. And the Turks collected tribute forcibly at intervals.

The above gives a fairly comprehensive account of the formation of the Katunski and Rijeka Nahias, from which Montenegro developed into a European State for a brief period.

The following is a brief account of the tribes which joined on later:—

### 7. TZRMNITZA NAHIA

III. The above is a large plemé near the head of Lake Scutari, on the west side of the Rijeka estuary. Until 1878 it was very important, as it was a border tribe and formed a buffer between Montenegro and the Turks. It claims blood relationship with the Piperi and Vasojevitches, but exactly how, I failed to trace. These two tribes traditionally descend from the same ancestor as do the Albanian tribes of Hoti and Krasnichi. Till well into the eighteenth century Piperi and Vasojevitch were Albanophone and Catholic. The Plamenatz bratstvo, one of the most important of Tzrmnitza, in fact acknowledges Albanian origin.

In 1322 King Stefan Urosh III gave the district of Orahovo in Tzrmnitza, and the men upon it and their families, to the Monastery of St. Nikola, on the island of Vranina. Among the names mentioned are those of Albanians (e.g. Voglitch, from Albanian "vogel": little) and his brothers, and a document drawn up in Ragusa in 1402 concerning some property mentions "Lumi Chirnica," i.e. the Tzrmnitza river ("lumi" is Albanian for river). The district was doubtless a mixed one, and those tribes which threw in their lot with Montenegro became Orthodox and Serbophone.

Tzrmnitza possesses the little monastery of Brchela, once a favourite wintering-place for the Vladikas, and also of the amiable usurper and impostor, Stefan Mali, who was murdered and buried there.

At times Tzrmnitza rebelled. So lately as 1847 Markisha Plamenatz, angered by the Vladika's unjust treatment, revolted along with all Lower Tzrmnitza and admitted the Pasha of Scutari with his troops and artillery. The Vladika was abroad at the time. The Petrovitches and their men hurried to the spot and were hard put to it to beat off the Turkish attack. Markisha took refuge in Scutari and was killed by a Moslem, who promptly fled to Cetinje, where he was richly rewarded for the job by the Vladika. The Turks, however, caught and hanged him later. The Plamenatz bratstvo was outlawed, and Pope Ilya, after-



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wards the celebrated Montenegrin War Minister and General in the wars of 1876-7, carried a Turkish standard in his youth. The old man whose career was so variegated, was still alive in my time. Thus did the tribes fluctuate from one side to the other.

IV. *Leshanka Nahia*.—This consists of three plemena. The Leskovitzi, and Drazhevo, of which I have no history, and the Shtitari, who are recorded to have been presented along with their land to the monastery of Vranina by King Urosh III. In this nahia, too, there is probably a foundation of old inhabitants into which later refugees came.

V. *The Brda*.—Here are three plemena. (1) Bijelopavlitch—the sons, that is, of White Paul, who trace descent from Pal i Bardhe (Albanian: White Paul), son of Lek Dukagin, lord of a large part of the Albanian mountains, of whom we shall speak later. The two chief bratstvos are Vrazhegrmtzi and Martinichi. (2) Piperi: The Piperi and Vasojevitchi of Montenegro and the Hoti and Krasnitchi of Albania all trace descent from a common ancestor (see under Albanian tribes). Montenegro was a microcosm in which primitive conditions are so recent that one could see under one's eyes the way a nation develops from tribes; how swiftly a language may change; and how small a clue it is to race; what a deep cleavage line is made by a different religion and even by a different costume. On primitive minds a different costume has the effect of school colours—a mysterious belief that you are bound to play on that side. The chief bratstvos of Bijelopavlitch are Trztzi and Stijeni. Jirecek found the plemé first mentioned in 1411. (3) The Pjeshevtzi, of whom I have no records.

The above three tribes being Christian and always fighting the Turks, more or less threw in their lot with Montenegro in the middle of the seventeenth century in the time of Vladika Danilo I, as did some other tribes in the east of Montenegro. The alliance was a loose one. The tribes fought for Montenegro when it suited them, but revolted whenever an attempt was made to tax them. They had, in fact, broken loose from Turkish rule in order to escape tax. Nor were they officially called Montenegrin. Code Danilo (1865) begins: "Danilo, Prince and Lord of Montenegro and the Brda," and refers separately to "Montenegrins and Brdjanins." The report of the Austrian envoy, Joseph Krmpotitch, in 1788 shows that at that date all these tribes were Catholic Albanians. He describes the unreliability of the Montenegrins and continues: "Very much more can one rely on the faith and courage of the Catholics of the Berda (*sic*), the very numerous Pjeshevtzi, Bijelopavlitch, Piperi, Kuchi, Bratnochich, Vasojevichi, Drekalovitchi, Klementi, Hoti, and Kastrati." A valuable record; for to-day all save Klementi, Hoti, Kastrati, and part of Kuchi are Orthodox and Serbophone. Once annexed, forcible Slavizing takes place.

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Hoti and Gruda, which were handed over to the enemy in 1913, are now being ground in the Serb mill. No Albanian school or book is permitted.

VI. *Lukovo*.—A plemé lying between Drobnjak and Nikshitch. I have no history of it. It was within the 1878 frontier of Montenegro. "Luk" means an onion and "grobnjak," garlic. It is odd to find the two names side by side.

VII. *Bratonozhitch*.—A small tribe east of Piperi, formerly, as shown above, Catholic Albanian. Off the track and hard to reach when I visited it in 1903, it was extraordinarily primitive. Rough-hewn wooden bowls were used to eat from, and slivers of resinous pinewood stuck to the wall with a lump of wet clay were the only means of lighting after sunset—barring the fire. As mentioned above, this tribe was Albanophone and Catholic in the eighteenth century.

VIII. *Vasojevitch*.—A large plemé of many bratstvos, some of which were Turkish subjects till 1913. Its most famous bratstvo was Voyvoditch. Its main divisions are Upper Vasojevitch (or Ljeva rijeka), Lower Vasojevitch, and right and left Polimnje.

From some old portraits I learnt that till the last generation the women had worn the costume and ornaments of the Albanian Maltsia e Madhe. Many of the men still wore Albanian dress. The name Ded (Albanian for Dominic) and the patronymics Dedovitch and Deditch are common. This is an obvious relic of Catholicism. St. Dominic was very much a Roman. Vasojevitch was a very proud plemé and boasted to me that even when nominally under the Turks it had always been practically independent. Headstrong too it was, and took part in the attempt to assassinate King Nikola in 1907. It was a stronghold of "the Club" which worked in connection with Belgrade for King Nikola's overthrow. But now, having "changed King Log for King Stork," Vasojevitch sadly finds itself worse off. It was the Vasojevitchi who, in the summer of 1912, rushed over the border and burnt several Turkish blockhouses to force the Turks to declare war. I saw the big guns which were taken to the frontier, and even over it, some months before war was declared. As in spite of Vasojevitch's efforts the Turks would not declare war, Colonel Vesitch said to me at the end of August: "We shall have to declare it ourselves." Montenegro did. Vasojevitch has thus the doubtful glory of having lighted the first sparks that finally blazed into the Great War; for that followed as a direct consequence of the Balkan wars of 1912-13.

I also found that some of the schoolmasters in the Serbian propaganda schools on Turkish territory were Vasojevitch men.

IX. *The Sharantzzi*.—A small plemé holding land on the left bank of the Tara next to Drobnjak. This was a "debatable land." The

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Sharantzi fought on the side of Montenegro, but were not included within the frontiers till 1878. In 1868 it was the scene of hot fighting with the Turks, and boasts in the ballads of having taken then twelve hundred heads.

X. *Moratchka*.—A plemé on the Moratcha whose sympathies must long have been Serb, for it possesses the most ancient monastery church of these parts—founded, it is said, in the twelfth century by Vuk, lord of the Zenta, younger son of Stefan Nemanja, the first of the long line of Serbian Nemanja kings.

Its interesting frescoes are repaintings of old work. The inlaid inner doors appear to be Turkish. The small town of Kolashin is in Moratchka and was a fortified Turkish outpost till 1858, showing that till then Montenegrin rule over this district was nominal rather than actual. The tribes, in fact, paid “haratch” to the Turks, though doubtless irregularly.

Kolashin is the Albanian Kol i shen: St. Nikola, no doubt the patron saint of the Catholic Albanians, to whom it once belonged. In 1858 the ballad tells how the monks of Moratcha monastery urged on the local voyvodas to attack Kolashin. Led by Voyvoda Novitz Perovitch, the tribes of Vasojevitch, Bratonozhitch, Rovatz, Moratcha, and Drobnjatzi attacked the little town on two sides, burnt and pillaged it, and carried off a thousand heads—that is, they annihilated the bulk of the male population. The district then became definitely Montenegrin.

XI. *Drobnjatzi*.—This is a large plemé west of the Sharantzi, having part of the left bank of the Tara as frontier. They are first mentioned in Ragusan archives, says Jirecek, as being on Durmitor in 1354: that is, pre-Kosovo. The archives state that the tribes of Trebinje in the Herzegovina, Gatchko, Banjani, Nikshitch, and Drobnjak are all “katuns” of Romani or Vlahs. The Drobnjatzi are, therefore, not refugees from the Turks, but descend from the pre-Slav Romanized Balkan people who took to the hills when the Slavs came and became herdsmen-serfs, and when their Serb overlord succumbed to the Turk, lived as semi-independent mountain tribes. Jirecek quotes the *Geographia* of Negri Veneti (1557): “The Romani whom the Serbs call Vlah.” Many of the Vlah still speak a debased Latin dialect; but the Drobnjatzi have long been completely Serbized. The word “Drobnjak” means garlic. The names, however, of the two great mountains in their district, Durmitor and Visitor, are said to be Vlah. The Drobnjatzi lands are well watered, wooded, and have fat pasture land where I saw plenty of fine-woolled sheep. For Montenegro, the people were well to do. At Shavnik, where enough little houses squatted together to be called a town, was the house of a man so enormously



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wealthy in sheep and goats that his family could not consume all their milk, so threw it into the river. Krsto admired this hugely. "Why do they not make and sell cheese?" said I. "Why trouble to make cheese when you are so rich as that!" cried everyone.

Drobnjak is proud of having produced a great man. The forbears of Vuk Stefan Karadjitch, the great collector of old ballads and folklore, came from a village near Shavnik. But, oddly enough, in his collection I failed to find the ballad of Milosh of Drobnjak, which I took down from dictation and which was one of Krsto's favourites.

Drobnjak consists of three divisions: (1) Drobnjak proper, as above. (2) Jezero (the lake), whose men reckon Durmitor as their possession. From Pirlitor on Durmitor came the mother of the savage hero of a whole cycle of ballads: Kraljevitch Marko. The peasants still point out the site of Voyvoda Momchilo's castle, now a mere stone heap, and the "kralj's woods," where he went a-hunting, till the fatal day when his false wife, Vidosava, betrayed him to his enemy, Kralj Vukashin, the Serb ruler of Scutari. By her treachery was Momchilo slain, and in triumph she opened the castle to the conqueror. Wine she served and a lordly meal. Short was her triumph. Kralj Vukashin arose, crying to his men: "Behold the harlot Vidosava! This day hath she betrayed an hero such as there is none other in all the world! So shall she not betray me to-morrow!" And his serving-men seized young Vidosava and bound her to the tails of horses, and drove them down from Pirlitor, and the horses tore her to pieces. Then Kralj Vukashin took the treasure of the castle and he took Jevrosima, Momchilo's fair sister, and wedded her: and she bare him brave offspring—Andriya and Marko—and Marko was like to his grandsire, Voyvoda Momchilo.

Such is the tale; a good example of mediæval marriage by capture. Is the strange name "Momchilo" Slavonic, or was the favourite Serb hero in truth half a Vlah?

In the deep valley below Pirlitor races the Tara. I crossed it on a crazy raft of planks lashed together in a triangle and slung perilously across the river by a cord. Then (1905) it was the Turkish frontier. There was a tale that the inhabitants on the Turkish bank descended from old inhabitants driven from Jezero by the incoming Drobnjatzi.

(3) The third division is the Uskotzi (Uskochiti: to spring into), formed, as the name implies, by refugees. They fled from Turkish rule in the Herzegovina in 1795. The Drobnjatzi gave them land, and till the middle of the nineteenth century they were among the most famous brigand bands (Cheta) that harried Turkish caravans and flocks. They and all Jezero were part of Turkish territory till 1878. The habit of ceaselessly fighting for independence, however, did not leave them. The Drobnjatzi were among the tribes who conspired against old





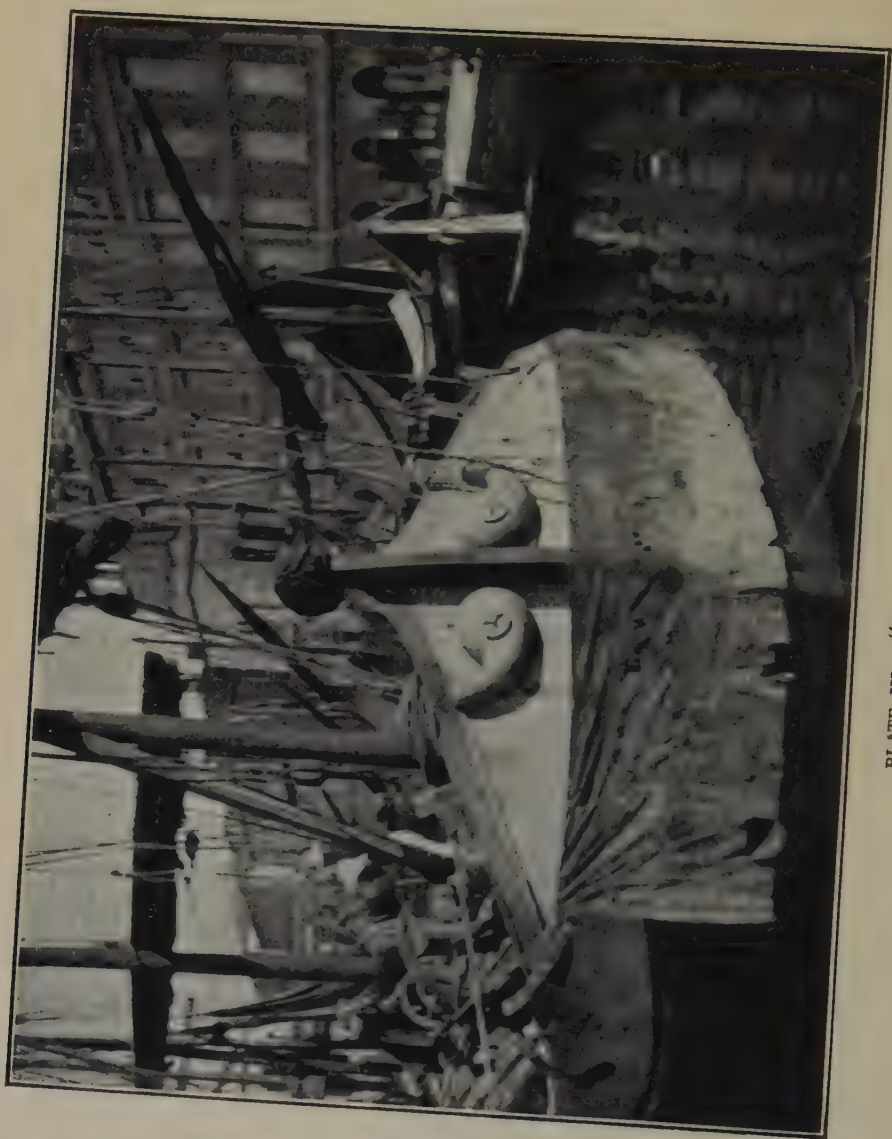


PLATE III.—“EYE BOAT,” ADRIATIC

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King Nikola in 1907. Since 1918 they have struggled against annexation by Serbia, and the Uskotzi are reported to have suffered heavily.

XII. *Rovatz*.—This is a small plemé between Moratcha and Bijelopavitch. It became Montenegrin previous to 1878. Lately it refused to accept Serb rule, but has been put down by the Serb forces and a large proportion of its houses burnt.

XIII. *Piva*.—This is one large plemé. The tribe land contains the old pre-Turkish monastery of Piva, and was Turkish territory till 1878.

Piva's hero was the Hayduk Bajo Pivljanin, after whom a street in Cetinje is named. He was killed fighting the Turks in 1712, and is said to be buried under a great block of stone in the graveyard of the little church of the Vlachs, at Cetinje. A ballad tells that he took to brigandage because a Turkish custom-house officer on the Bocche refused to take money payment of the dues on cattle driven by him to the coast, and seized the finest beasts instead. Bajo gathered a band and used to spend the summer plundering the Turks, and wintered comfortably at Perasto, on the Bocche, where he was highly esteemed.

XIV. Next to Piva lies Dugi Nahia, which previous to 1918 contained only part of the Gatchko plemé, the rest being Austrian subjects. Gatchko is a plemé stated in Ragusan archives to be Vlah.

In the Dugo (long) pass the Montenegrins of old constantly waylaid "Turkish" flocks—the "Turks" here, as in all these districts, being Montenegrins and Herzegovinians who had turned Moslem.

XV. *Nikshitch Nahia*.—This, too, is recorded as of Vlah origin. But both here and in Dugo the inhabitants had largely become Moslem, and when in 1878 the district was allotted to Montenegro, the Montenegrins seized the lands and goods of these unhappy people and expelled or slaughtered the owners. "Conquering heroes" were settled on the land. Montenegro adopted a similar policy with territory gained in 1913. The "biter" is now "bit." The Serb has fallen upon the Montenegrin. Such are the glories of war.

XVI. *Banjani*.—A large plemé first mentioned, says Jirecek, in 1319 as a Vlah katon, and thus one of the oldest recorded as dwelling continuously on the same land from pre-Turkish days. The old monastery of Kosijerevo is in Banjani, but judging by the ballads there were many Moslems as well as Orthodox in the tribe. The more fertile parts of Banjani around Velimje and Vilush must have been inhabited earlier than Jirecek's date, for a number of the very massive monolithic gravestones common in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and usually ascribed to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, are to be seen there. Notably in the graveyard of St. Petar Cetinski at Rijechni, near Vilush, is a fine stone carved with rude figures dancing the kolo.

XVII. *Oputna Rudina*.—This is a small plemé next to Banjani and

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Nikshitch. Of its history I know nothing. Its name (Rudina: field or meadow) suggests it as an old herdsmen's ground. It was Turkish till 1878.

XVIII. *Grahovo*.—This Herzegovinian plemé and its land became Montenegrin in 1858, after a crushing victory over the Turks gained by Grand Voyvoda Mirko, father of the late King Nikola. Prince Danilo was then reigning, but Montenegro was not yet recognized as an independent European State by the Powers, though a frontier commission was appointed to inquire into the matter.

A few more nahias, administrative rather than tribal, annexed in 1878, remain to be considered.

XIX. *The Zeta and Podgoritza*.—This district, when annexed, was largely inhabited by Moslem Montenegrins and some Albanians. I found many of their descendants on Turkish territory—the Slavs mostly in the Sanjak of Novibazar, and the Albanians on the shores of the Lake of Scutari between the frontier and Scutari. Wholesale expulsion and confiscation of Moslem land by the Montenegrins changed the population. The attitude of the Montenegrins to these poor people was amusingly shown by Krsto. When on Turkish soil, on our way back from Plevlje, a kindly peasant hailed us, and asked us to have coffee in his hut and eat our lunch there in the shade. I accepted. The man spoke Serb and was very civil. An earnest Moslem, he begged me if I had any wine with me not to drink it inside his house. He showed me his garden and flocks, and told me he had to work very hard, for his father had been one of those who were robbed of all they had and driven out of Montenegro in 1878. He remembered vividly his sufferings as a child, but by hard work he thought he was now better off than if he had stayed in Montenegro. Krsto was horrified. "But we thought," he declared naïvely, "that you would all have died on the mountains!" Many had starved, said our host. But this did not console Krsto, and as we rode away he grumbled: "We ought to have killed them all. We meant them to die, and that man is better off than I am." It was useless for me to say, "If you had worked as hard you might have been richer"; for Krsto suffered from a fixed idea that a Christian "junak" should never work. After the Moslems were expelled from Podgoritza and the neighbourhood, many Scutari Catholics drifted into Podgoritza, for they were industrious tradesmen, which the conquering Montenegrins were not. A remnant of Moslems who remained cultivated market gardens and supplied the town. The Albanian traders absorbed most of the trade both in Podgoritza and Cetinje; and by dint of hard work were rapidly absorbing the capital of the country. But for the Great War they would probably have peacefully reabsorbed a large part of Montenegro in time; but the Serbs have now expelled or killed many, and the trade of Montenegro since it lost its independence has dwindled.



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So much expulsion and resettlement has taken place both in 1878 and 1913-18 that probably all trace of former tribes in the district is lost.

XX. *Primorje and Kraina* (coast and borderland).—This includes Antivari and Dulcigno, a wholly Albanian town unjustly handed by the Powers to the Montenegrins in 1878, though they had failed to take it. Mr. Gladstone, who had never visited these districts, thought all Moslems were Turks and all Balkan Christians angels; and pitilessly insisted on the cession of the luckless Albanians to their worst enemy. The Montenegrins being no agriculturists, much of this annexed land went out of cultivation. One old Serb plemé—the Mirkovitchi—lives between Dulcigno and Antivari; but the district, even in old days, was never Serbized. Antivari, from a very ancient date, has been continuously a Catholic bishopric, and till Scutari was promoted, was archbishopric for the North Albanian mountains. Until the Turkish conquest the town population of the Primorje was largely “Latini,” who spoke a Latin dialect. That it was not Serb is shown by Stefan Dushan, whose title was “Tsar of the Serbs, of the Greeks, of Albania and the Primorje.” The two latter districts were among the first to break off from Serbia after his death.

Dulcigno, in the Middle Ages, struck coins of its own, and both that town and Antivari had independent privileges. The Dulcignots were hardy seamen and had a large coast traffic, including piracy, in boats with great eyes carved and painted on the bows. “Eye boats” were still to be found in 1913.

XXI. Last of the tribes composing Montenegro in 1913 were the two wholly Albanian tribes—Kuchi and Triepshi—united into one nahia for administrative purposes. All Triepshi and part of Kuchi were given to Montenegro by the Berlin Treaty in 1878. Here I found severe Serbizing in process. The Albanian costume was forbidden, and the wearing of the Montenegrin cap compulsory. The children were forced to go to the Montenegrin school, and no Albanian school, book, or paper was permitted. In the wars of 1912-13 this district suffered heavily, as Montenegro took the opportunity of thinning off her Albanian population by sending its battalions to the danger-spots. When a number of bereaved families asked for help from my relief fund and I was about to distribute flour, the distribution was forbidden by the Montenegrin Governor of Podgoritzza, Stanko Markovitch, who, in reply to my remonstrances, said it did not matter how many Albanians died, relief might be given to Montenegrins only. So terrorized were the Catholic priests of the district that they dared not accept for their flocks a gift of old clothes offered by some French Catholic nursing-sisters.

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Of the Triepshi tribe about half traces descent from Hoti, and will not intermarry with it.

Part of Kuchi—the Drekalovitch bratstvo—became Orthodox, I was told, early in the nineteenth century, when it began to fight on the side of Montenegro against the Turks; but it traces descent from the Albanian tribe, Berisha, the oldest in the Northern mountains. Marko Miljanov Drekalovitch was a great warrior, and with his men took part in the capture of Medun in 1877, then a Turkish border fort.

The other bratstvos of Kuchi are Senitza and Orahovo, of which I have no history. The bulk of Kuchi, when I knew it, was Serbophone and Orthodox. All Triepshi was Catholic and Albanophone.

So strongly, however, did Drekalovitch cling to ancient usage that, though both Church and State had divided it into two groups and declared them intermarriageable, I was yet assured (1913) that no marriage had taken place. Drekalovitch would not "marry its own blood"; nor does it marry with that part of Kastrati in Albania which traces descent from emigrants from Drekalovitch. (See Kastrati.)

The "Chuzzi, Albanese del rito Romano," are mentioned in 1614 by Marino Bolizzo (Jirecek).

### 8. DEVELOPMENT OF MONTENEGRO INTO A STATE

We have thus a general view of the group of tribes which formed Montenegro. In origin it appears to have been composed largely of Vlah and Albanian herdsmen, some of whom have been Serbized only within the last few generations. In early days the tribes made no effort to join the Serbs and struggled only for independence. Outside pressure alone united them, and that has not always held them together.

Tribal feeling was still strong when King Nikola gave a Constitution and Parliament to his people in 1905. The deputy for each tribe was apt to vote against a vote of money for public purposes (e.g. telegraphs) being given to another tribe if his own tribe wanted one. Within living memory the tribes had fought each other. In 1903, at Kolashin, Serdar Martinovitch told me when he was first there he had to quell both individual blood-feuds and fights between the plemena.

We have seen that in the beginning a tribe is a group of persons related by blood who unite voluntarily for mutual aid and protection. So necessary is some sort of tribal discipline that in tribe-law the tribe is the unit and the individual almost nothing. In order to transact business with other tribes special laws must be made. Thus a "Home Office" and "Foreign Office" evolve. But though in a sparsely populated land, with enemies prowling outside, the tribal system makes for

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strength, when populations increase, and tribe pressing on tribe constantly fights its neighbour, the system becomes a great source of weakness, and unless the tribes unite into a nation they fall the victim of some other people who have long dropped the tribal system and have become a Power.

"Power" is the only word applicable to the present groupings in Europe, for all the Great Powers are compounded of many different stocks. The Powers of to-day are very modern groupings so far as world history is concerned. All West Europe derives from different compounds of the same stocks in various proportions; we see the folly of small tribes fighting each other, but have not yet realized that many of the present subdivisions of Europe are as foolish.

We have ample data for tracing the evolution of Montenegro into an independent State and its subsequent fall. Both Russia and Austria began, in the seventeenth century, to consider what use might be made of the half-savage Montenegrin tribes as a thorn in the side of the Turks, for both Russia and Austria coveted Turkish territory.

In 1696 Nikola, son of Schepan of the Jerakovitches of Njegushi, was elected Vladika (Bishop) of Cetinje, and consecrated as Danilo I, at the same time assuming the name of Petrovitch—it is vaguely said from an ancestor—as his bratstvo name. By his merciless massacre of Moslem Montenegrins one Christmas Eve early in the eighteenth century, he attracted the notice of Peter the Great of Russia, who at once enlisted him as an ally "to conquer the Turk and glorify the Slav faith and name." Thus the Petrovitches first rose to power. Subsidized now by Russia, now by Austria, sometimes by Italy, and even by the Turk, this family managed to keep the headship of the country in the teeth of occasional opposition, till the fall of King Nikola in 1918. In a very poor land the man with a little money and force of character—and this the Petrovitches did not lack—is fairly sure to gain power. The headstrong and autonomous tribes recognized no rule but their own; but by retaining the spiritual headship of the land the Petrovitches gained a hold otherwise unobtainable. "Spiritual" is perhaps hardly the word for the power exercised by superstition upon a savage people; but for want of a better it may stand. Primitive people are often more easily led by means of their imagination than by their reason, and will yield obedience to dread of the unknown which they will not yield to force. Moreover, the monastery owned the Lovchen and other land, and had feudal rights over it.

Here is a contemporary picture of the Vladika and his people:—

In 1759 Russia sent an envoy, Putchkov, to Montenegro along with Vladika Vasili Petrovitch, nephew of the then "reigning" Vladika Sava. When lacking funds, the Petrovitch ecclesiasts used to go and beg for



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money in Russia—to build schools and churches. Vasili had gone on this errand. Russia gave—and sent Putchkov to see what was done with the money.

He reported on March 21, 1760. On arriving he was met by the two Vladikas and a great crowd “of the basest kind.” The Vladika wished at once to lead him to a place where he could hand over the 15,000 roubles, but Putchkov insisted on waiting for the general meeting of headmen (Narodni Zbor). He was hurt to find that the people knew nothing of Russia, for the money previously sent had been represented to be a gift from the Vladika. This matter nearly concerned the power of the Petrovitches, and as the Narodni Zbor drew nigh, Vladika Vasili grew anxious. He begged Putchkov not to explain his mission to the Zbor, as its members were ignorant and would betray secrets. It would be better to call a very few “glavari” (heads) to the Vladika’s house. This was done, the glavari sworn to secrecy, and the Russian money then handed over. This makes it clear that the money went only to the Petrovitch clique. Putchkov says he believes the reason the Narodni Zbor was not summoned was because Vasili feared he would be killed—for he was hated by the people. Had Putchkov blurted out the fact that money for distribution had been previously sent, the heads who had had none would have been furious. Putchkov notes that Vasili stuck close to him for protection. The populace, he says, is savage, and without much trouble no order can be made, for it knows no law (*v.* section on Tribe Law). Putchkov ends by doubtfully saying perhaps something could be done by Russia by means of priests and ecclesiastics; but that Vasili must not be concerned in it. Poor Vasili—his idea of living a Christian life was killing Moslems. This he did efficiently, according to the ballads, and was a better planner of ambushes than churchman. He acted up to his dim lights, and hardly deserved his death in misery and abject poverty in St. Petersburg in 1766, tended only by his young nephew, whom he brought with him on a last and vain begging expedition. Putchkov’s report had hardened Russia’s heart. But as Vasili was a real bishop, his starved body was given a funeral at St. Alexander Nevski, the price of which, if given him while living, might have sent him home happy. He is not the first, nor the last, savage chief who has trusted a Great Power and been betrayed.

Though Russia neglected Vasili she kept a grip on Montenegro. The Orthodox Church in Russia was the only Orthodox Church not under the Turks. Russia, therefore, looked on herself as head and leader of the True Faith, the predestined heir to the Byzantine throne—a notion that has cost Europe much. Montenegro, then, was reckoned merely a recalcitrant corner of the Turkish Empire. Russia chose to subsidize the powerful bratstvo—the Petrovitches—and enable them,



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under the guise of religion, to play a leading part as Russia's ally against the Turk. Not the first time that land-grabbing schemes have been decently draped with a veil of "Christianity."

Russia's plans for using the Petrovitches were almost upset after Vasili's death in a very strange way. Vladika Vasili had acted as deputy for his cousin, Vladika Sava, who was the real Head of the Church. Sava was not a fighting man and lived retired in a monastery. News came to Russia that a new leader had appeared in Montenegro and that the land was in a ferment. Stefan Mali (Stefan the Little) said he was the Russian Tsar Peter III, who had in truth been murdered some years before, and told a thrilling tale of escape. The heads of the tribes eagerly listened to him and enthusiastically hailed him as leader. Who he was and whence he came has never been certainly proved. He is said to have come from Dalmatia or Bosnia. Not only Russia but also Venice was dismayed that the Montenegrins—whom both had been industriously "wire-pulling"—should thus strike out a line for themselves. Montenegro's boasted "independence" has always been that of a mouse with a string to its hind-leg; or, at best, a tethered bull incited by its masters to gore within a given radius.

The records of the Venetian Inquisition of September 26, 1768, tell that: "A strange unknown person has appeared in Dalmatia and Albania"—Montenegro, as old maps show, was then only reckoned as part of Albania—"who announced himself as lawgiver in religion and politics, called himself Peter III, Tsar of Muscovy . . . got a party of adherents round him" . . . and, in short, was making trouble. The Inquisitors at once sent stringent orders to the Governor of Dalmatia that this dangerous person should be removed ("tolto del mondo") as cautiously as possible. As the Governor failed to "remove" Stefan, the Inquisitors entrusted a bottle of poison to a certain Count Zorzi Cadich Cornetta, who set off at once on the errand but failed, and returned the poison, unused, to the Inquisitors. His name—Cadich—suggests a Slav with a Venetian title. Russia, too, took active steps. Prince Dolgorouki was sent with a suite of thirty Russian officers to inquire into the matter and to enlist Montenegrins for the war which Catherine II was waging with the Turks. The Russian mission addressed itself to Vladika Sava. The account written by Vladika Petar II from local tradition has truth stamped upon it. We cannot doubt the details. Vladika Sava and some ecclesiasts received the pompous Russian officers in the poverty-stricken monastery at Cetinje, and the dismayed Prince found that before business he must drink rakia with the priestly assembly. Used to much finer vintages, he pleaded that he was not a rakia drinker. It helped him not. Down the fiery fluid had to go. Amazed at his company, he asked if any of them had regular hours

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for meals, rising, and sleeping, and was told by Igumen Mrkojevitch that "when he was hungry it was noon; he did not care about sitting at supper, drank a glass of wine by the fire, went to bed, and rose at dawn." The "glavari" arrived with much gun-firing, hailing Dolgorouki. Up came Stefan Mali with an enthusiastic escort. In the general excitement Dolgorouki could hardly get a hearing. He loudly denounced the impostor in the name of the Empress of Russia—a great name to conjure with. The scared Montenegrins refused to allow Stefan to be shot, but as he admitted in terror that he was a fraud and, according to Vladika Petar, said he was a Raitchevitch of Dalmatia, they permitted his arrest. He was locked in a room above the rooms where Dolgorouki and suite were uncomfortably lodged. Meanwhile Brkitch, Patriarch of Ipek, and Vladika Arsenija had fled into Montenegro to beg help of Stefan Mali. The unlucky Montenegrins bewailed that they had now a patriarch, two vladikas, a Russian prince and thirty officers, and not a soul to lead them, and the Turks were threatening to invade them. Dolgorouki learnt, to his dismay, that the Turks rejoiced at his imprisonment of the "Emperor" Stefan Mali.

The Montenegrins wanted a leader; Vladika Sava was useless. In spite of Dolgorouki they believed in their Russian Tsar, Petar III, who had so marvellously appeared among them. Dolgorouki, said they, had dared not kill him, nor even imprison him, save in a room above his own—thus proving his high rank. They began to growl ominously. The position of the Russians was awkward. One tale relates that the Montenegrins "rushed" the place and freed Stefan. Another is that Dolgorouki, tired of the affair, set him free. In any case, a few days afterwards the Russian mission, which had arrived in full dress with a letter from the Tsaritzza of All the Russias, sneaked stealthily down to the Bocche di Cattaro along with the Patriarch of Ipek, who feared in case of a Turkish invasion he would certainly be a victim, managed to hire a boat, and sailed away. Stefan reigned till 1774. His rule was stern, and he is said to have reduced the tribes to some obedience. The greater his power the more the Turks hated him. He was murdered at the monastery of Brchela by a man said to have been sent by the Pasha of Scutari, who was the Turkish governor of the district.

On his death there was no leader save the incapable Vladika Sava, who was succeeded in 1782 by his sister's son, Vladika Plamenatz. Judging by the reports sent that year by the Austrian envoy, Colonel Paulitch, Plamenatz was an incapable drunkard. The Petrovitches were no longer to the fore. The ambitious bratstvo Radonitch had lately obtained the hereditary post of Gubernador or civil governor, and Austria proposed to use them as counterpoise to Russia and the Petrovitches.

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Paulitch writes in despair of the savage state of Montenegro. "They have," says he, "no police and no laws. The headmen have a certain authority for managing common business and laying blood-feuds, but for the first the consent of the people is needed, and for the second that of the parties involved. Formerly the only civil head was the serdar in each nahia. Katunski Nahia, because of its size, has two serdars. The father of Gubernador Radonitch was the first man to whom the nation gave the rank of Gubernador, in order to be held in more respect by the Venetians and Turks." This shows that the tribes knew that in having a bishop as head they did not differ from any of the other Christian subjects of the Turks. The possession of a recognized civil governor was needed for any claim to recognition of independence. "The headmen have no power to punish or command. Each man is ready to reply: 'I have no lord but God. I honour you as headman, but do not take your orders.' . . . The headman's power is but that of persuasion. . . . Murder is usually avenged by murder." Of the spiritual power he says that since the removal of the Patriarchate of Ipek the Vladika of Montenegro is spiritual head of Ipek in Stara Serbia, and of the Orthodox in Dalmatia, but that, save for needing his services for consecrations, the foreign priests do not obey him. In Montenegro he consecrates priests and visits churches, but "Not so much for the sake of pastoral duties as to collect the so-called 'milostina' (alms), which the monks, too, go in search of. Such power as the Vladika has depends largely on his power of excommunication, which the people dread. The Church possesses the best fishing-places on the lake, some two thousand head of cattle, and much land. Radonitch's father, when Gubernador, tried to obtain the highest respect for himself, but failed. His son now tries to do so, and might succeed were he more talented and had more money. . . . The Metropolitan Plamenatz is given to drink, and so little respected he could put slight hindrance in his way." Paulitch is uncertain if Montenegro can be called independent. The Montenegrins on the plains pay the Turks tribute. Katunski Nahia and Rijeka alone have paid none since 1768 (i.e. for fourteen years). The apparent independence of the land depends as much on its mountainous character as on the courage of the people. The difficulties of the land make it not worth taking. Of Russian influence he says: "The Metropolitan Church has received every three years one thousand florins. The Vladika, who has visited Petersburg for the purpose, has received gifts of vestments, Mass books, gold medals, and some money. . . . These things, say the people, do not benefit them. . . . Since 1779 no Vladika has been to Russia." Paulitch hopes Russian influence is waning, and thinks it might be replaced by Austrian influence on the Gubernador.



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He draws a grim picture of blood-vengeance, and says the Montenegrins themselves say they need a strong master to stop it. "During our stay in Montenegro only four men were shot, but during the seven months in which the Gubernador went to Vienna and returned thence with us, more than a hundred men were shot in vengeance."

He ends the report by saying that the land cannot exist much longer without foreign aid, and suggests that Austria might bind the headmen to herself by gold and gifts. To which Kaiser Joseph II replied: "I am of opinion that this whole Montenegrin affair is not worth taking farther. In peace it would be costly, and in war not of sufficient use."

In 1788, as Russia was again active, Austria sent Joseph Kermopotitch, who reported unfavourably, and in 1798 G. M. Brady, in a report from Cattaro, makes it clear that the tribes have thrown in their lot with Russia. Austria's subsidizing of the Radonitches failed. "The Gubernador sees his authority daily waning, while that of the Vladika waxes and advances towards its goal." The Petrovitches and Russia are again to the fore. "The frontiers," says Brady emphatically, "must be fixed to force this horde of brigands to remain within their frontiers, which they cross to molest the subjects of his Imperial Majesty, and make them victims of brigandage. . . . The Montenegrins have usurped five miles of our frontier and robbed our subjects of their lands." He states that an envoy of the Tsar has come with rich gifts for Montenegro, and that the popes lament: "Had we but followed the Vladika's advice we should now be happy Russians." The Vladika received the Russian officers at Stanojevitch with a salute of guns and hoisted the Russian flag on the monastery, though it was on Austrian soil.

But until Montenegro had a temporal and not an ecclesiastical head no separation could be recognized by the Powers. When Petar II, the last Vladika of Montenegro, died in 1851, he named as his successor his nephew, Danilo. Danilo at once stated that he did not mean to take Holy Orders and would accept temporal power only. He was, in fact, about to marry an Austrian lady. Till this time it was through the Church that Russia had directed Montenegro. There had been difficulty more than once in transmitting the power of the Petrovitches through uncle to nephew. Ecclesiastically it was irregular. Practically, the support given by Russia made it possible. An hereditary reigning dynasty would give Russia a far firmer hold and Russia consented. Danilo was proclaimed prince, and the Church affairs only were to be administered by a bishop. The Sultan, who had accepted the bishop's administration of local Christian affairs as he had done in other provinces, protested against the election of an hereditary prince, and



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at once attacked Montenegro, which was saved from destruction only by the diplomatic intervention of Austria and Russia.

Fearful of offending the Turks, Danilo refused to aid Russia in the Crimean War. The French, who then hated Russia, offered him a subsidy and concessions from the Sultan if he would accept Turkish suzerainty. Fear of his own subjects made him refuse. The Turks again attacked, and but for the valour of Danilo's brother, Voyvoda Mirko, father of the late King Nikola, Montenegro would have suffered badly. Attempts to tax the newly annexed Brda tribes provoked revolt. Danilo was never popular. His severity in suppressing rivals and crushing revolt made him many enemies, and in 1860 he was assassinated, and was succeeded by his nephew, the late King Nikola, during whose reign the independence of Montenegro was recognized by the Berlin Congress in 1878.

Thus we have a complete picture of the development of a group of tribes of mixed origin into a recognized nation.

A picture, too, of the struggle between the Teuton and the Slav for control of the Balkans; and of the struggle between Rome and Byzantium. The Montenegrin tribes were won over to Russia and the Orthodox Church, and used so long as they could aid Russia's plans. Finally Montenegro, being of no further use to anyone as a cat's-paw, has disappeared, though she deserved a better fate.

The tribes, however mixed they may be in origin, having become Serbophone and Orthodox, were almost bound in time to gravitate into the Serb mass, but a cruelly violent shove has hastened their so doing.



*SECTION II*

GOVERNMENT AND LAW

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## SECTION II

### GOVERNMENT AND LAW

#### 1. STRABO AND THE ANCIENT TRIBES. THE COMING OF THE SLAV

As we have seen, Strabo (*ob. c. A.D. 20*), in his detailed account of the Balkan tribes of his day, tells us in the fragmentary account of Dodona that "Among the Thesprotæ and the Molotti the persons who hold office are called Peligones, as among the Macedonians." Also that "most of the tribes were governed by native princes."

In most parts of the world the tribe, with a chieftain and a council of headmen, has existed or exists. The North Albanian tribes, when I visited them, were the last tribes in Europe to preserve autonomy.

The governing councils consisted of elders—"plaki," an old man ("plekmit," plural). The idea of administration of law is so closely connected with old age that "to arbitrate" is "me plechnue," and "plechni" means both "seniority" and "arbitration."

The resemblance between Strabo's word "peligones" and the modern Albanian terms is so striking as to suggest that the Albanian "plak, plaku, pelaku" (all variations of the same word) are in fact Strabo's "pelig," that "ones" is merely an added termination, and that both custom and name have survived uninterruptedly. We need not doubt that under Roman rule the tribal system continued just as it does to-day in Africa under the British Empire.

The Serbs, we are told, were also tribal, but of this there is little information. One of the earliest contemporary accounts of their irruption into the Balkan peninsula is that of John of Ephesus, who says: "This same year, the third after the death of Justin (A.D. 574), was famous for the invasion of the accursed people called Slavonians. . . . And four years have now elapsed and still, because the Emperor is engaged in war with the Persians, they live at their ease in the land, and spread far and wide, and ravage and burn, and take captives. . . . They have ridden even to the walls of the town (Byzantium) and driven away the Emperor's horses—many thousand—and even to this day they still dwell free of care or fear and lead captive, slay, and burn, and have now grown rich in gold and silver and herds of horses, and have learned to fight better than the Romans, though at first they were rude savages and did not dare show themselves outside the forests and coverts of

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the trees and, as for arms, did not know what they were, except for two or three kinds of javelins and darts."

Thus he describes them as a savage horde, but gives no information as to tribes or chiefs.

It was fully another century before the Serbs were finally established and settled. Presbyter Diocleas, though hopelessly confused in his details about dates and persons, probably records a true tradition in his *Chronicles* when he describes the invasion of the pagan Slavs thus: "The Christians, seeing themselves placed in great tribulation and persecution, began gathering themselves together on mountain-tops, and strove to construct strongholds and castles and edifices, that they might escape from the hands of the Slavs till God should visit them and set them free."

The mountain dwellings of the Vlachs and the Albanians still bear witness to the flight of the old inhabitant before the invader. To what extent the partly Romanized Illyrian populations became intermixed with the Serb it is impossible to say, but the Serb differs so much from the Northern Slav-speaking peoples (Poles, Czechs, Russians) that a considerable admixture of other blood is suggested. That this differed in various regions is shown by the place-names. Slavonic names are thickest in Serbia (pre-war), in Macedonia, and in Bosnia—that is, in the most fertile districts. They are rarest of all in North Albania, and are scanty in South Albania and in Thrace. In Montenegro and the Herzegovina there is a sprinkling of non-Slavonic names. Antique Greek and Roman names appear mainly on the coasts. Inland, "Nish" preserves the Roman (? pre-Roman) name of "Naissus"; and "Uskub" (Turkish) and "Shkupi" (Albanian) preserve the old "Scupi," now completely distorted by the Serbs into "Skoplje."

How much of what survives of tribe and tribe law is a remnant of the Illyrians and the "peligones," and how much is Slavonic, can hardly now be determined; but it is of interest to note that tribe and tribe law have survived longest in those districts which were least under Serb rule—Albania, Montenegro, and the Herzegovina.

### 2. TRIBE LAW IN NORTH ALBANIA

#### THE CANON OF LEK DUKAGIN

Whenever in the mountains I asked why anything was done, I was told, "Because Lek ordered it." Law, custom, usage, were all attributed to Lek. That he must have been a man of strong personality to have thus set a mark on a people is obvious; but very little is known about

him. His Canon was handed down orally to the elders and in their hands has been somewhat modified in different districts, but was in force through all the North Albanian mountains, both Moslem and Christian. Truly "in force," for "Lek said so" obtained more obedience than the Ten Commandments, and the teaching of the hodjas and the priests was often vain if it ran counter to that of Lek.

Who was Lek Dukagin? The Dukagini were chieftains in North Albania, and the few references to them show they ruled wide lands. In 1309 King Urosh II signed himself "King of Serbia, Chelmie, Dioclie, and Albania," and his successors styled themselves "King of Albania" till Stefan Dushan's death in 1356; but the Serbs, though they exacted tribute and labour from certain districts, do not seem to have penetrated and influenced the mountains. Only thus can we account for the fact that, except near Scutari, the place-names are Albanian, and that so soon as the Serb Empire began crumbling on Dushan's death the names of Albanian chieftains appear. The oldest reference to the Dukagini I can find is a letter, *Acta et Diplomata Res Albaniae Illustrantia* (No. 133), from Pope Innocent III to the "noble man Demetrius, Prince of Albania," replying to one asking for religious instruction, and a document of 1216, explaining that "Demetrius is son of Progon and brother of Gini, Count of Albania."

Hopf (*Chroniques inédits Greco-Romanes*, Berlin, 1873) gives, as a result of much search, a pedigree of the Dukagini. The earliest is "Tanusius I, Dux Ginus, Lord of Zadrima, the Black Mountain (Mal i zi on the Drin?), Pulati, and Shati." He is probably the "Dux Ginus Tanuschus Albanensis" who is taken prisoner by Johannis Scotus, Charles of Sicily's Captain, at Durazzo in 1281 (*v. Acta et Dip.*, No. 455). "Gini" is Albanian for John. "Dukagini" is Duke John; "dux," in the sense of leader or chief. The title "duca" hails from Venice, just as do "gubernador" and "kapetan" in Montenegro.

From Tanusius Dux Ginus descends Lek (Alexander) I. He was a chieftain who aided the Venetians against the Turks. A dispatch from Alessio, December 1387 (*Acta et Dip.*, No. 413), states that the brothers Lek and Paul Dukagin permit free passage through their lands to the Ragusans. In 1393 (*Acta et Dip.*, No. 501), the "noble lords, Progon and Tanus, brothers, sons of the late lord Lek Dukagin, lords of the castle of Alessio," in their own names and on behalf of their relatives, hand over Alessio to the Venetians, being unable to hold it against the Turks. This Tanus is described by Hopf as lord of Fandi (now part of Mirdita). As he was lord also of Alessio this shows his lands to have been wide. He had a son, Paul, lord of Gurikuchi, Salita, etc., whose son, Lek II, is probably the Lek of the Canon. Hopf describes him as lord of Dagno and Zadrima between 1444 and 1459. These were the



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days of the oncoming of the Turk. Lek fought on the side of Venice, and when Scutari fell in 1472 he and many refugees fled to Italy along with the Venetians. But when Sultan Mahommed II died in 1481 and his sons fought for the throne, Turkish rule in Europe was in a critical state. The Serbs, however, helped to re-establish it by fighting on behalf of one of the claimants. During the confusion Lek Dukagin returned to his homelands, as did also Ivan Tzrnojevitch, the founder of Montenegro. Ivan became a vassal of the Turks, and is known to this day in Montenegro by his Turkish title, Ivan Beg. Lek Dukagin is not recorded to have done so. That he ruled as he pleased in the mountains is shown by his great fame there. It is said that in 1464 Pope Paul II had excommunicated him for his most un-Christian code.

Of the descendants of the Dukagini two are recorded as turning Moslem. Some settled in Venice—a “Luca Ducagini Duca di Pulato e dell stato Ducagini” is recorded in Venice in 1506. The Bib Doda family, who, until the Great War, were the hereditary chiefs of Mirdita, claimed descent from the Dukagini, but could give no definite pedigree. The tribe Bijelopavlitch in Montenegro traces descent from Paul i Bardh (Paul the White), brother or nephew of Lek.

Though Lek enforced the Canon, it so much resembles tribe law of other lands that we cannot believe he originated it in the fifteenth century. What he evidently strove to do was to check crime by inflicting certain punishments. That—as the tribesmen always declared—he both ordered the taking of blood and fixed a punishment for so doing, is incredible. He probably modified and added to existing law and strictly enforced it.

This is the Canon so far as I know it. Dom Kol Ashti, the very worthypriest of Shkreli, gave me many facts. Others I learnt from Mgr. Miédia, now Archbishop of Scutari. Much I picked up in my travels, and by comparing all have compiled the following account. In Maltsia e Madhe the Canon was much modified. Among the Dukagini it was in more primitive form. The Turkish Government had somewhat modified it; but everywhere it emphasized the tribe. The tribe has jurisdiction only within its lands.

### MURDER WITHIN THE TRIBE

Murder may be the result of a quarrel or it may be a blood-feud, the cause of which is more or less remote. In either case the man who has taken blood flies at once to a safe place outside the tribe. Any house is bound to give him hospitality. In the case of a feud, he is regarded as a most unfortunate man who has but done his duty. He at once proclaims his deed. The headmen of his tribe then meet and



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order his house to be burnt. Among the Dukagini the council has power also to destroy his crops, cut down his fruit trees, slaughter his beasts, and condemn the land to lie unworked for a term of years. An incredible amount of food-stuff is thus wasted. In this group not only the man who has taken blood, but all the males of his "house," are liable for blood, so they, too, have to fly. The "house" is the home maybe of a whole family community—forty people. But the law is carried out to the last letter. Such desolated spots have I seen. But "It is the Canon, so must be obeyed," was the answer to any remonstrance I made. The women and children may scatter and find shelter in other houses if they can; they usually do. A man can save his house if he can return to it and defend it three days successfully, so that the men sent by the council cannot set fire to it; I saw "a very brave man" in Berisha who had three times saved his house thus. Or a man can save his house by inviting the head of another mehala to act as house lord and defend it with his own men. This might cause severe fighting. The council, to prevent this, then as a rule agrees to burn the house only and spare the property. The amount of property to be destroyed was always to be decided by the council.

In Maltsia e Madhe a man was allowed to redeem his house by paying from £5 to £10 by a modification of the old law.

In addition to the burning of the house, in all tribes a fine has to be paid. Fines are paid in sheep or cattle. The fines varied in different districts. In both groups a fine had to be paid to the Turkish Government. In the case of Maltsia e Madhe this was paid to the Sergerdé and the Bulukbashes, who represented the tribes in Scutari. It was generally paid punctually. "Lek decreed that a fine must be paid, so it must be." Moreover, the Turkish Government had a certain hold on all the nearer tribes, for it could hold as hostage any member of a tribe which owed blood-gelt and came to market at Scutari. The outlying tribes of Dukagini by no means always either notified or paid for their murders.

Feuds being very weakening to a tribe, the headmen of the tribe or friends of the family would attempt to stop the feud. Blood-feuds of the Dukagini and Pulati tribes are settled in the mountains; those of Maltsia e Madhe were settled in Scutari before the representatives of those tribes who lived there.

The peace-making is preceded by the "gjaksur" (he who owes blood) sending some friends to the "zoti i gjakut" (lord of blood) to ask for "besa" (promise of truce). This may be granted and further prolonged, and during the truce the gjaksur and his relatives are safe. To end the feud, "me paitue gjak" (pacify the blood), twenty-four con-jurors are needed to swear the peace oath with the gjaksur. The

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plaintiff (lord of blood) has the right to name them. Or they may be named by the "bairaktar" (head of the tribe). This is only done if the matter cannot be settled by con-jurors chosen by the plaintiff.

The gjaksur has the right to object to two of the con-jurors, who must be replaced by others. The con-jurors are all men of standing in the tribe ("plect," elders; "kren," heads). They examine the facts and hear the accused ("gjaksur") and decide if peace can be made and on what terms. If all twenty-four agree to take the peace oath with him he is then reckoned innocent, and he and his family do not owe any further blood, but pay blood-gelt to the zoti i gjakut. This varied from about £25 to £50. If they all agree but one, he may be replaced by two others. If still no agreement is come to, the gjaksur may bring more con-jurors, who are members of his family, up to the number of eight.

Agreement having been come to, the whole party goes into the church (or mosque) before which the council has been held. In the church the candles are lighted on the altar, and in the presence of the priest the gjaksur swears his innocence. He no longer owes blood and is, therefore, innocent. Next swear those of his family who may have been summoned, and then all the con-jurors. After this the gjaksur and the zoti i gjakut frequently ratify the peace by swearing blood brotherhood (*v.* Blood Brotherhood).

By Moslems the oath is sworn in the mosque.

Each of the con-jurors has to be paid a small fee for his services. The plaintiff in some cases can thus annoy the accused by insisting upon the full number of con-jurors allowed by the law. A priest counts as twelve con-jurors, and sometimes an important elder is reckoned as two.

The oath being taken and the blood-gelt paid, the man is free to return to his burnt house and repair it. Being as a rule of solid stone, only the roof and woodwork need renewing. If he is a popular man, other members of the tribe help him both to pay the fine and start life again.

To Mgr. Miédia, now Archbishop of Scutari, I am indebted for an account of how two families can make peace voluntarily without appeal to the law. Having ascertained by means of emissaries that peace will be acceptable, the gjaksur and his relatives choose a feast day and enter the house of the injured family with their hands bound. A child placed the wrong way round in a cradle is carried with them. If the peace offer is accepted the lord of blood loosens their bonds and puts the child straight in the cradle. The blood-gelt is then arranged and paid. This custom existed among the Dukagini.

The above all refers to a murder committed by one man. But it may happen that several men all fire at once and kill a man. A search

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for bullets is made in the body. If four men have fired and but three bullets are found, any one of them may be innocent of the death. If each can get twenty-four con-jurors to swear innocence with him, all secure acquittal. Any who cannot find twenty-four con-jurors are guilty and owe blood. If there are as many bullets as men, then all owe blood.

For killing a woman, which is a rare thing, blood may be taken. If she is unmarried, it is taken by her father's family; usually by her brother. If married, her father's family may take blood for her within the year. After that only her husband's family has the right to do so. Blood-gelt, if any, for a woman is very small. The tribe does not punish the murderer; it is purely a family affair. The death of a woman does not weaken the tribe, for she is of another blood and can easily be replaced from without; whereas a man cannot be replaced.

If a pregnant woman be killed two bloods can be claimed. Dom Kol Ashti told me that cases have occurred even in which a grave has been opened to settle the question of blood-gelt for the unborn child, and full payment claimed if it proved to be a male.

*Cases in which killing is justified and is not punishable.*—1. Blood may be taken for rape and none may be taken in return.

2. If the relatives of the man who is shot succeed in taking blood at once, shoot the murderer that day, the blood is laid and no more can be taken.

3. A woman taken in adultery may be killed along with her partner by her husband or brother, and no punishment follows. But should her husband kill her and not the man, her family can take blood for her.

In none of the above cases, I believe, does the tribe punish; nor has the tribe, at any rate in some places, the power to punish a crime committed within the "shpi" (house). When I was in Shala, at the priest's house in 1908, we heard two shots fired. Someone ran in to call the priest to a man who was dying; it was too late. In a dispute about the irrigation channels in the fields, a man had killed his own first cousin. Both were inmates of one large house. The crime excited genuine horror and was loudly discussed. Public opinion seemed to think something should be done—but what? It is the clear duty of a house to take blood as atonement for blood that has been taken. But the house, having already lost a man, cannot make matters any better by taking more of its own blood. This could not be expected; nor could any outsider interfere in what was a matter for the house lord. He could not be both lord of blood and gjaksur—could not owe himself blood. It was, in fact, an example of *patria potestas*. He decided to do nothing but hold a fine funeral to show his regret for the loss; and so sure was he that he was acting correctly that he sent a boy to the priest's



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house to borrow sugar for the funeral feast—a request which was refused. As I was the priest's guest, I could not attend the funeral; but it must have been interesting, for the murderer was one of the chief mourners—perhaps honestly so. My suggestion that he should be handed over to the Turkish authorities in Scutari for punishment was not received at all well by anyone; and it was pointed out to me that had it not been the Will of God the man could not have died of only two bullets. Many men live with more in them. This curious case suggests that in earlier days the house lord may have had the power of life and death over his subjects.

### MURDER OUTSIDE THE TRIBE

The tribe inflicts no punishment. The Turkish Government got its fine if it could. Fines, in fact, being part of the Government's revenue, no effort was made to stop blood-taking by it.

The relatives of the murdered man take blood for him, of the family of the murderer if they can. An intertribal feud may become so intense that two whole tribes are "in blood." Peace can only be established by a Council of Elders of both tribes. When made, it was sometimes strengthened by marrying the daughter of one party to a man of the other. Or blood brotherhood may be sworn. The blood-gelt, fines, and the peace oath are as already described.

### WOUNDING

A wound inflicted intentionally comes under the laws for blood. The house of the guilty man can be burnt and his goods can be seized (this in Dukagini), as in case of murder, if the elders examining the case think fit. He is liable to have his own blood taken by the injured man or his relatives. Blood of his son and brother may be taken (Dukagini).

Con-jurors up to twenty-four may be called, but according to the nature of the injury a smaller number may suffice. The fine paid is in proportion to the wound, and is decided by the elders. The price to be paid for a death—a fatal wound—is taken as standard, and the wound reckoned as one-half, quarter, tenth, etc., of a death price. It is, in fact, payment for the amount of blood lost.

In the case of a wound given accidentally, the house is not burnt, but the wound must be paid for. A man I knew, playing with a rifle, accidentally shot a woman through the foot and, unfortunately, made her lame for life. He had to pay fifteen napoleons to her husband (for damaging his property), and had to undertake to pay a further fifteen should the woman die at any future time as a result of lameness.



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The question as to whether a wound had really been given accidentally was, of course, a fertile source of dispute. In a land where everyone carried fire-arms there were surprisingly few accidents.

### THEFT

*Theft within the Tribe.*—The procedure for trial is the same as with murder. The plaintiff appeals to the bairaktar if he has previously not been able to obtain redress by appealing to the head of the family which has robbed him.

A sufficient number of con-jurors must then be found before whom the accused may swear his innocence and who will swear it with him.

There is a fixed number for various thefts. Eight for horse-stealing, six for cattle-, and two for sheep- or goat-stealing.

A thief found guilty has to pay twice the value of the article stolen: give two sheep for one. Half the value of the article stolen is divided between the elders who have tried the case. For anything stolen off Church land as much as ten times the value may be demanded; and in olden times I was assured that a fancy value was placed upon a stolen cock—possibly because it was held to have great power against evil spirits. If a man's only cock was stolen, it is easy to see that these might suddenly attack him when unprotected.

If the house or cattle-shed is broken into, an extra fine of about £4 has to be paid.

The number of con-jurors depends on the value of the stolen article, and may be as many as ten.

*Theft from another Tribe.*—As in the Highlands of Scotland of old, lifting cattle from across the border of another tribe was considered rather a sporting event than a crime.

Mountain bands who raided the environs of Scutari and carried off Turkish goods were heroes. The practice was precisely the same as that of the Chetniks of Montenegro and the Hayduks of Bosnia. This custom had been modified, and the tendency was to arrange intertribal theft by arbitration—the procedure being the same as that with theft within the tribe, except that heads of both tribes took part in them.

This was usual in Malsia e Madhe. But in the Dukagini tribes, especially the distant ones, much cattle- and horse-theft went on between tribes who, owing to blood-feud, had not a "besa" (peace oath) with each other. When I was in Nikaj, one of the wildest of the tribes, Nikaj and Krasnichi were on the worst terms. Watch-fires twinkled at night on the Krasnichi mountains, and talk was all of horse-stealing and cattle-lifting.

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A quarrel broke out between Krasnichi and Shala. Shala had a besa with Krasnichi, but the Krasnichi had harried some Christian villages near Djakova which claimed descent from Shala. Shala therefore declared the besa ended and raided Krasnichi at night, stealing three mules. This caused complications, for Shala and Krasnichi do not border with each other. Krasnichi sent three headmen to Nikaj to accuse Nikaj of having sheltered and fed the mule-stealers on their way, and being thus party to the theft. The Nikaj men and three Krasnichi sat all day at the foot of the big wooden cross in front of the church and argued furiously—Nikaj loudly protesting ignorance and innocence of the whole affair and bidding Krasnichi to go to Shala.

Vexed with Shala for getting them into trouble thus, a day or two afterwards Nikaj went a-raiding to Shala and stole two fine horses. Shala sent delegates and complained that the theft was unfair. The horses were not Shala horses but belonged to guests—some Klimenti men who had come under besa to pasture some beasts. The horses were, therefore, under besa, too, and should not be touched. Nikaj only replied rudely: "You should not leave the horses of guests straying about." And my horse and Marko's were put at night into one of the church outbuildings to secure them from retort. The two horse-stealers, however, kindly offered to sell the horses to Shala for five hundred piastres apiece. Shala was enraged. The sitting lasted till late, and the debate was put off till to-morrow. But next day the Shala men and the horses had all disappeared in the night. The two horse-thieves came in hot indignation to the church house to ask the Franciscan's advice. They considered that in stealing their own horses back and going off with them Shala had played a dirty trick and acted most unfairly. The Franciscan, Marko, and I all shouted with laughter: "Bravo, Shala!" The two thieves were hurt. In all innocence they told of the great pains they had taken to steal the horses in the first place, and now they had been robbed. It was most unfair. Nor could the padre make them see it in another light; for to them robbery from a tribe with which there is no besa was rather a merit than a crime.

Nikaj argued that if Shala had the right to take back these horses, then Shala should restore the three mules taken from Krasnichi. A delegate came from Shala to debate this and to ask, "Are you in besa with Krasnichi? If so, we return the mules." As Nikaj was in blood with Krasnichi and only a day or two before had refused to have anything to do with the mule matter, Nikaj could not defend its proposition. Shala withdrew, leaving Nikaj furious and the poor horse-thieves much depressed.

Such raids, of course, easily start blood-feuds. The more civilized tribes and the intelligent headmen, who were increasing in number

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and gradually reforming matters, were working towards punishing them in the same manner as theft within the tribe.

The fights between Montenegro and the Turks were usually brought about in this manner. The Montenegrins raided the Turkish borders, especially Herzegovina, till the Turks sent punitive expeditions. All sheep-stealers were considered heroes.

So far as my own experience goes I never had a thing stolen from me when among the Albanian tribes ; they dealt honestly by me always.

### FINES FOR OTHER MATTERS

In the case of rape the injured family may take blood; or it may compound for peace and accept about £30. The father of an illegitimate child must pay for its keep.

For killing a sheep or cattle a fine of about £2 to £3 per head.

For cutting wood in the forest of others, £2.

For stealing fruit, etc., according to value.

For putting a beast to graze on someone else's pasture, £2.

For putting beasts to graze on your own tribal pasture before the right season, £4.

(The sums given are only approximately taken at the then value of piastres.)

### INHERITANCE

No land may be sold or bequeathed to a member of another tribe or any outsider.

The possessor of land can only sell it to his nearest male relative on his father's side.

Women cannot inherit land.

The house and such land as belongs to it is inherited by all a man's sons equally. As a matter of practice they continue living in it, and the eldest son is "zoti i shpis" (house-lord). I have seen a young man of twenty-eight years ordering his old uncles about in most peremptory manner. Expressing surprise at the way they obeyed, I was told: "They must—God has made him house-lord."

Failing sons, the property belongs equally to the nearest male relatives of the deceased, who usually would be his brothers. The eldest is then house-lord.

Should a man leave a wife who has had no children, she is of no account, and must leave the house and return to her father's house. Should she have a son under the age of fifteen she remains to mind the house till he inherits it. Till he is fifteen a guardian takes charge of his affairs. At fifteen he is of age and can carry arms. If the widow has



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a daughter and no son she has the right to remain a hundred days in the house. Then if the heirs order her to leave she must go, but her daughter remains as part of the heir's household, and he has the right to choose her husband and dispose of her. In practice the widow may remain in the house as "levirate wife" of one of her brothers-in-law, and very commonly does so among the Dukagini. In Malsia e Madhe the practice is obsolete.

If the widow has had a son who has predeceased his father, she has more consideration. If the house is a small one, she may live in it if capable of carrying on. If a large one, she may live as a member of the heir's household so long as she is unmarried. If she elects to return to her father, the heir, or heirs, must supply her regularly with wool for spinning, bread, cheese, and other necessities so long as she remains unmarried.

A married daughter has no right to anything whatever of her father's property; she no longer belongs to his "house."

### TRIBAL BUSINESS

Business relating to the whole tribe requires a very large council. In a large tribe the council may be about a hundred. It includes the heads of houses, the heads of mehalas, the bariaktar, and twelve specially chosen elders famed for their intelligence. Such a council, for example, was needed to decide if each tribe would accept the Turkish Constitution in 1908; to decide if a tribe would revolt or aid another that has revolted; what side it would take in war, and so forth. Smaller councils dealt with pasture lands; how many beasts each house might pasture upon the common lands; the date at which pasturing might begin.

The rights of wood-cutting, too, were thus regulated. Certain groups had rights in certain woods. Unluckily no one ever thought of replanting. Great harm has been done by deciding to burn a forest in the hope of obtaining pasture land; only too often the result being that the winter rain carried away the soil and left bare rock. The water supply is also controlled by council, especially in those districts where an ingenious system of channels carries water great distances and takes it across valleys on rude aqueducts made of hollowed tree-stems. In time of scarcity the number of hours per week in which a man may turn the water into his fields is jealously regulated. Purposely defiling wells and springs was punishable.

Not only all the above laws are ascribed to Lek, but many rules intended to keep the peace. For example, that men marching abreast must keep the length of a gun-barrel apart, lest in turning hastily it



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should strike the next man and the blow would entail a fight and blood. Women should walk the length of a distaff apart—they usually spin as they go—lest a blow given should draw their men into a fight.

Neither man nor woman must pass between two persons who have just been speaking together, for (? in some occult manner) this will cause them to quarrel. So strong is this belief that once in a small hut a woman gripped me by the shoulder, dragged me out, and squeezed herself between me and the wall in order to avoid passing between me and Marko, where there was plenty of room. Lek, I was told, had so ordained. I like to think that he did his best by means of house-burning and fines to diminish the very ancient custom of "blood," and that he did not deserve the Pope's excommunication.

As we have seen, house-burning and fine are the only punishments under the Canon. Nevertheless, by decree of the council of the whole tribe the death penalty can be inflicted. In February 1912 an amazing case of wholesale justice was reported to me which had recently taken place in Mirdita. A certain family of the Fandi bairak had long been notorious for evil-doing—robbing, shooting, and being a pest to the tribe. A gathering of all the heads condemned all the males of the family to death. Men were appointed to lay in wait for them on a certain day and pick them off; and on that day the whole seventeen of them were shot. One was but five and another but twelve years old. I protested against thus killing children who must be innocent and was told: "It was bad blood and must not be further propagated." Such was the belief in heredity that it was proposed to kill an unfortunate woman who was pregnant, lest she should bear a male and so renew the evil. Three shots which missed were fired at her; she rushed to a man and called on him to protect her. He took her under his besa and she was spared.

A case of private "justice," though it took place in South Albania at Postenani, a small isolated village, and so is not connected with the Canon of Lek, is so singular that it should be recorded. I stayed some days at the village and, when leaving, a crowd gathered to see me start. When we were on the way my guide asked if I had noticed a woman who had stood near the door; I had not. He said it was a pity, as she was a very brave woman and had saved her husband. They owned a house and some land; a child was born to them, and all went well till her husband's brother arrived. He was a bad man, and demoralized the village, not only by starting gambling with card games, but by drinking and teaching very vicious practices to the youth. The woman with dismay saw her husband taken with the gambling craze, playing away his goods, and nearing ruin. Then the child was ill. She prayed her husband to send for a doctor; but the nearest was a whole day's

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ride distant, and he replied it would cost too much. The child died. The woman then became desperate, and to save her husband she killed her brother-in-law. I asked, "Did she shoot him herself?" "No, she paid a Turk to waylay him on his way to market." The whole village was glad to be rid of him. Everyone knew she had done it. "But what did her husband say?" "At first he was angry, but he soon saw it was for the best. Now they live happily, but God has not given them another child." "Could he not have been handed over to justice instead of being shot?" "No, he was rich and would have bribed the Turkish authorities, and have been let off and been worse than ever." "Did not the Turkish authorities interfere about the murder?" "No, why should they? It was within the family, and all agreed it was right. She saved not only her husband but the whole village, and was a very brave woman."

#### 3. MONTENEGRO

The first written Code of Laws was drawn up for Montenegro by Vladika Petar I in 1796.

An examination of this Code shows that it is meant to deal with a state of affairs resembling that with which the Canon of Lek Dukagini deals, and is a step in advance. All early accounts of Montenegro show the tribes ceaselessly "in blood" with each other, and the rules and customs identical in most respects with those of the Dukagini. Nor is this surprising, for our examination of the Montenegrin tribes has shown that many are of Vlah and Albanian origin, and that the Montenegrin is not so much a Serb as a Serbized descendant of the older inhabitants.

Vladan Georgevitch, in *Europa i Crnagora* (Belgrade, 1912), gives many documents which show this resemblance of the customs of Montenegro to those of the Dukagini. From that of the Russian, Putschkov, dated March 21, 1760, we learn that the then Vladika Vasili was afraid of his own people and kept near Putschkov as a protection. This shows that in Montenegro, as in Albania, a man could not be shot if with a guest. "The people," he said, "are wild, and without great trouble no order could be made among them, for they recognized no right and knew no law. If any does harm to another, blood is at once taken, and the murderer flies to another district, where he is safe from punishment. Thus a Popovitch of Tzrmnitza Nahia killed a neighbour and, leaving wife and children, fled to Cetinje. They 'destroyed' his house—that is, they pulled off the thatch and pulled out a few stones." He reports that he saw many such houses. "If the murderer is of a powerful house he stays at home, and 'the house' wages war with that of the murdered man till peace is arranged by the headmen or the

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Vladika. Till the latter custom began recently the Montenegrins lived in perpetual feud with each other." Putchkov asked Voyvoda Plamenatz, who was not only a headman but an ecclesiast, to visit him at Stanojevitch, and received the reply: "You know we are 'in blood' with both Cetinje and the Pastrovitches, and that it is dangerous for us to come over their mountains." When asked why they were "in blood" he replied: "Because of a sheep." The Tzrmnitza men had driven sheep on to the Pastrovitch pasture and refused to pay. The Pastrovitch killed a ram; Tzrmnitza then killed a shepherd.

Putchkov held a meeting to try to induce the people to accept some form of Russian law. He opines the effort is vain. The churches are empty and so miserable that they are not recognizable as churches. There are neither crosses nor ikons nor books in them. The Vladika Vasili says he has sent the crosses to Venice to be gilded and is taking care of the books. Russia might do something with the country, but not by means of Vasili, for he is "ambitious, money-loving, and a loathsome slanderer." From extracts from the Vienna archives (*v. Georgevitch*) we learn similar facts. An Austrian envoy, Colonel Paulitch, writes to Vienna in 1782: "The nation has no police, no laws. A kind of equality rules among them. None in his heart thinks himself less than his chief or headman. These have only a certain authority for the common business and for settling blood-feuds. But for the first the consent of the people is necessary, and for the second the consent of the two parties concerned. . . . For deliberations over common business the gubernador summons the serdars, voyvodas, and Knezhes. Similar meetings are called in the nahias and by them is a truce or peace arranged between two villages or families. . . . In practice, murder is usually avenged by murder."

Another Austrian envoy, Joseph Kermopotitch, writes in 1788 a vivid account of the incoherent mass of half-savage tribes. Owing to poverty Montenegro cannot exist without aid from other lands. "The people live by raiding cattle, etc., from the border-lands. They are led on these raids even by their priests. They are divided into rival families, between whom blood-feuds rage. There is no sort of unity. During our stay some were with us, others sought our destruction. Some fought the Turks; some were in alliance with them. They have a bishop, serdars, gubernador, and voyvodas. But these are mere names. People obey only so long as they gain by so doing. . . . We even heard a common man say to the Vladika's face: 'Holy Bishop, you lie like a dog! I will cut your heart out on the point of my knife.' Except that they keep the fasts they have no religion. . . . All is done with the animal impulse of lust, hate, and selfishness. We could never satisfy them. When we thought we had won one with a gift, next day we



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found he had joined the opposition party, or he demanded a gift as though he had not had one. Even the Vladika (Petar I), though he tried to gain our favour by all means . . . could not hide his false, intriguing heart. *It is said this nation is independent* and has always fought the Turks. *This we found false.* Two nahias on the Albanian border and part of two others always pay tribute to the Pasha of Scutari. . . . To oppose the Turk with courage is not their game, for on God's earth there are no more crafty men than the Montenegrins. They only fire on an enemy when hiding among rocks; never in the open."

Such was the state of Montenegro when Petar I was vladika. He called a council and made a code in order to diminish blood-feuds and make some order. "Calling God to our aid, we confirm these presents composed by us on the day of the Transfiguration, 1796. We pronounce anathema on any traitor, curse him for ever, and declare him dishonoured and expelled from the tribes (plemena)." Thus expulsion from the tribe is one of the main punishments, as in the Canon of Lek.

*Law 2.* "If a Montenegrin kills one of his brethren, not by necessity but by malice or pride, he cannot save himself by a payment of money, but if taken shall be hanged, or stoned, or shot." This is the first attempt of a central government to stand above tribe law, but blood-gelt continued to be paid for some two generations later on exactly the same lines as under the Canon of Lek Dukagin, and it is said the death penalty was rarely inflicted.

3. "If the murderer be not captured and have fled over our border, his goods great and small shall be sold, and half given to the family of his victim and half, as fine, to the Government." Here, as with Lek, the family gets blood-gelt, but the Government, not the tribe elders, gets part of the fine.

4. "Such a criminal may not return to his house nor to our land, and the Montenegrin or Brdianin who shall protect him, knowing his guilt, shall be punished as is the criminal."

This is an important emendation of tribe usage. It was held a point of honour to shelter a man flying from "blood," and the custom has not died yet. When Mehmedbashitch, one of the gang who shot the Archduke Ferdinand in 1914, fled over the Montenegrin border, he was at first arrested by the Montenegrin police as a suspicious character. When Austria demanded his extradition—he was the only one of the gang that got away—Petar Plamenatz, who was then Minister of Foreign Affairs, instructed the police, who had arrested the criminal as a suspicious character, to let him escape, and returned to Austria the reply that nothing was known of his whereabouts. He was sheltered in Montenegro till November 1914, when he joined the Serbian Army.



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5. "Such a murderer may be killed wherever he is found. Any Montenegrin may kill him—*though he were the slayer of his own brother.*" This makes it clear that it was permitted to take blood for a brother, and that this was not "murder."

6. "If any man in dispute wound another with sword or gun, both shall be brought to judgment to inquire into the cause of quarrel, and the judges shall value the wounds and punish him who is guilty." The punishment here is as in the Canon of Lek. But the two parties are brought before a court, it appears, whether they wish it or not. They are not to be left free to decide for themselves whether or not it shall be settled.

7. "A Montenegrin who without cause shall strike or wound another with a weapon, at a moment when there is no need for him to display his courage, shall suffer a heavier penalty by paying a double fine."

8. A man who strikes another with his hand, foot, or chibouk, shall pay him a fine of fifty sequins. If the man struck at once kill his aggressor, he shall not be punished. Nor shall a man be punished for killing a thief caught in the act.

9. If a gun goes off accidentally and kills or wounds a man, as often happens, justice must remedy the misfortune as well as possible.

10. If a Montenegrin in self-defence kills a man who has insulted him, after having vainly called upon him in God's name to cease his insults, it shall be considered that the killing was involuntary.

11. "He who takes a woman whose husband is living, or a girl not given him by her father (or her guardian, if an orphan), according to the rites of religion, shall be expelled from our territory and his goods sold and divided as in the case of an assassin." Abductions were a very fertile source of blood-feud, and this was a determined attempt to substitute some other punishment for the shooting which, as a rule, took place. Expulsion from the land took place quite recently. I knew Serdar Jovo Martinovitch, who in 1903 had not long returned from exile. When a young officer in the Montenegrin Army and a married man, he bolted with a girl, was expelled from the army and Montenegro, and lived many years in Bulgaria, where he rose to high rank in the army. His deserted wife having died, he married the woman he had bolted with, and was then allowed to return to Montenegro and its army. He was governing Kolashin when I met him first. But he had then a third wife. Number two had bolted with an officer. Jovo wished to follow and kill them, but was restrained by his friends, and pursued the more modern method of a divorce.

12. "A priest who marries a man and woman when the woman has a living husband, or a girl forcibly captured, or a woman under

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a religious vow, shall be expelled from the priesthood and the land." This again indicates that abduction was common and that the priesthood winked at it.

13. "If a thief be killed or wounded in the act of stealing, no claim can be made regarding him for compensation. Anyone has the right to treat him as a criminal."

14. "Any theft committed before these laws were promulgated shall be judged by the old usage." Unfortunately we are not told what it was. Possibly it was by Lek's Canon, for the fines were thus revised: "Any later theft shall be judged thus:—

For a cow or ox, 12 sequins indemnity, and 10 as fine.

For sheep, goat, or lamb, 5 indemnity, and 10 as fine.

For theft from a house, according to value, thus: if an article be worth 1 piastre, an indemnity of 5 piastres, and 10 as fine."

### LAND

15. "Anyone wishing to sell a house, field, vineyard, or wood, must first offer it to his relations in the presence of witnesses. If they will not purchase, he may offer it to the next neighbour." (These would certainly be near kin.) "Should he refuse it may be sold to anyone within his tribe. But the offers and refusals of the relations must be written, signed, witnessed, and dated, and the bratstvo of the tribe to which they belong must be given."

### DEBT

16. "Any claim made for a debt, for stolen beasts, etc., must be made before a justice. Those who attempt to seize goods for themselves in compensation are liable to punishment." But even such mild and reasonable laws could not be enforced. Each man preferred to be his own policeman. A couple of years later the Vladika added some further pronouncements to his Code.

17. "Knowing that most of the blood and evils spread through our land are caused by thieves, and that parents are most guilty, for they do not bring up their children fitly and in the fear of God, but teach them to rob others, we establish to-day by this article that whosoever shall steal a horse or ox or anything in Montenegro or the Brda or Primorja, or from our friends and neighbours in the Imperial and Royal States of Austria, he shall be expelled as is a man who has killed another illegally. For by his theft he causes tears and sorrow to a whole family, especially if they possess no other ox or horse and are forced to sell a field to buy another. For the first offence he shall be fined as above.

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For the second, he shall be treated as a murderer. Theft will not be tolerated. Each head of a house must train his family not to steal the goods of others."

18. Blood-vengeance must not be taken across the frontier; the case must be submitted to judgment.

19. Commerce in the bazaars has been hindered and the church of God has been dishonoured by violent brawls. Any man exciting brawls at the bazaar or before the church shall be arrested and judged.

20. Taxes are to be paid for government purposes, e.g. the judges, the defence of the country. The head of each district shall bring the tax to the gubernador at Cetinje on the Day of the Assumption.

21. Some persons provoke duels. Each gathers as many on his side as he can, and many lives are lost and blood-feuds ensue. Children even kill each other, while perhaps the duellists escape uninjured. Anyone provoking such a fight shall be treated as a malefactor." There are a few more laws of no great interest. Of the procedure in court, all we are told is that: "If the judges do not agree, the opinion of the majority shall be accepted." Actual cases, published by Vuk Vrchevitch, which were tried in 1840-50, show the procedure to have been exactly the same as that of the Canon of Lek. We will give a few later.

Vladika Petar I was a great man and, like other great men, ahead of his time. His Code had little, if any, effect. Mickiewicz, writing in 1841, says that "Montenegro has no species of government. It consists of twenty-four tribes, each with a chief who has no governmental power. The Vladika is regarded as head of the country, but his political authority is nil. He calls the nation to war if attacked by the Turks and sometimes presides at councils, but has no authority except over the clergy. Blood-vengeance is developed into a system. A whole tribe will avenge a murdered member, and often the most important man of the tribe is chosen as victim.

"If the murderer's tribe is very powerful, the injured tribe will often make peace on payment of a blood-gelt of a hundred ducats (about £50, i.e. approximately the same as the Albanian blood-gelt of Lek Dukagin). Thieves are pursued by those whom they have robbed, and forced to make payment or are shot, and a fresh blood-feud begins. It is impossible to punish a criminal who has taken shelter with his family, as they think it the last infamy to give him up. Everything seems to show that the attempted reform will not succeed and the land remain in its primitive state. As judge a man is chosen who is strong, has many friends, and is a good shot. It is the only way. Women have no independence. They are forced to work in the house and the fields, the man occupying himself with fighting. The heads arrange the marriages and the young have no choice."



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### CODE DANILO

In 1855 Prince Danilo promulgated a more elaborate Code "in accord with the chiefs and elders of Montenegro and the Brda." The transition from a system of equal tribes to a system of central government now really begins. The punishments are death, fines and imprisonment, and flogging. The two latter appear for the first time. An idea of what might happen at a trial is given by Law 6. Judges are told they "must hear both parties and not allow one litigant to strike another or prevent his speaking."

And the giving and accepting of bribes to pervert justice is punished by fine and imprisonment. The judge is a man now who is specially appointed and must undertake no other work. Tribal law and the Council of the Elders is being gradually superseded. Law 3 states: "To-day, in future, and ever, the person of the Prince is inviolable and sacred to every Montenegrin and Brdianin." Law 4: "Should a Montenegrin or Brdianin offend against the person or character of the Prince, he shall be punished as is one that kills a man."

The need of unity against a common foe is strongly enforced. Tribes that were discontented or were "in blood" were very apt to go over to the Turks. Therefore (Law 6) "every traitor to the country who shall agree with our foes or cause revolt shall, if this be proved by two witnesses, be shot." Law 17: "The most lowly Montenegrin or Brdianin may kill such a traitor. Those who conceal a man declared a traitor shall be punished as he is."

18. "In time of war every Montenegrin and Brdianin must march against the enemy of our country so soon as he hears of it. Should any man or district fail so to march, such cowards shall be disarmed and can never again carry arms and shall be without honour in the land. They shall be forced to wear women's aprons to show that they have not men's hearts."

It is of interest that Vrchevitch, describing an episode of the middle of the eighteenth century, states that by old custom a man who failed to respond to the call to arms was liable to be stoned to death—that is, treated as a woman, for whom stoning was considered the fit punishment, instead of being shot as a man.

One object of Danilo's Code is to prevent every man being his own policeman. "The authorities of State send judges, chiefs, or perianiks to arrest the guilty man, and these must take care not to kill an innocent man, as in that case they must answer for his blood before the tribunal."

A wound given in a dispute is to be valued and paid for as before, but "the faults committed on both sides must be investigated and the



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guilty punished by prison or fine." Here we enter a new phase of thought. Under old tribe law it was the shed blood that had to be compensated. The question of who began the quarrel was of no moment.

By Law 34, as before, however, a man who is struck for no reason by a brother Montenegrin with his foot or pipe may kill the striker at once, and it shall not be reckoned a crime, and no compensation may be asked.

Law 39 tells us: "Both Montenegrins and Brdianins, having the custom of taking blood not only of the assassin but also of his innocent relations, all such vendettas are now prohibited. He who kills an innocent man shall be condemned to death. The assassin alone may be killed. He shall be prosecuted by law and shall pay for murder with his own head. His relatives shall not be molested."

Law 40. Duels are permitted, but the seconds may not take part and the population must not be called on to help either party. Any joining in the fight will be fined 100 thalars.

There are numerous laws respecting damage to property, all intended to enforce a trial of the accused and stop each man from taking the law into his own hands.

Danilo made an effort also to stop frontier raiding. "In times when we are at peace with the Turkish districts on our borders, chetas, brigandage, theft, and all malversations are forbidden, and all loot shall be returned and the thief punished. But only in time of peace." This law, it need hardly be said, had little, if any, effect.

### INHERITANCE

As before, real property cannot be sold to anyone outside the tribe, and must first be offered to the near relatives before being sold to a distant member of the tribe. But a man may "share goods which he has personally acquired as he pleases, leaving more to one son than another, or may even will them to a stranger."

The real property, as in old tribe law, is divided among his sons, if he have any. But the widow has a share so long as she does not remarry.

As in old tribe law, a married daughter inherits nothing.

53. "A man having no son but leaving unmarried daughters, they inherit the patrimony, except his weapons, which go to the nearest male." In the case of a single daughter, if she marry, her husband lives at her house and ceases to be a member of his own tribe and takes the name of Dmozetovitch (son-in-law of the house).

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### “PATRIA POTESTAS”

47. “Sons cannot separate from their father without his consent. Without this, separation cannot take place in his lifetime.”

58. “It may happen that a son does not respect his parents and causes them sorrow. In the first instance he shall be punished with a fine. If he offend again and will not obey or respect them, he shall be imprisoned and suffer corporal punishment. This punishment shall be inflicted if he yet again offend. After the third offence the father is at liberty to expel him from the house.” Expulsion, I have been told, meant disinheritance.

### THE ELDERS

The councils of elders still had power over local affairs.

Law 62 states that they may impose fines up to twenty thalars. All values in excess of this must come before the superior tribunal. A good many laws concern the enforcing of taxation. Prince Danilo’s efforts to collect a national revenue resulted in fierce revolt, bloodily suppressed.

Law 66 gives us an idea of the state of the Church: “Each priest in our land must go to church every Sunday; must keep the church clean, and punctually obey the canons of the Church. He must influence the people to good as much as possible and instruct them in our holy religion. Those who do not fulfil these obligations shall be expelled.”

67. “Divorces between man and wife, now so frequent, are forbidden, except in cases permitted by the Church on account of impediments or faults of husband or wife.”

Law 68 shows that it had been customary to arrange marriages without giving the girl a voice in the matter. Child betrothals were still common, and in fact are but recently given up.

“From this day forward three days before the ceremony the local priest must ascertain if the young girl be willing to marry the man who demands her. If a priest celebrate a wedding against the will of one or other party he shall be expelled from the Church. The betrothed may separate before being joined by the priest.” This is a great step in advance, as previously a betrothed girl could not marry another without causing a blood-feud. Law 70 goes even farther, and states that “if a girl unknown to her parents has of her free will married a man, nothing shall be done to them.”

A man who forcibly abducts a girl is prosecuted as a criminal, expelled from the country, and his goods are confiscated and divided as in the case of the goods of a murderer.

71. “Should a man make a woman or girl pregnant and refuse to marry her he must pay 130 thalars to bring up the child, and, if a boy,

it shall receive the same share of his goods as a legitimate child. The child's mother shall receive no compensation. If the man have the child brought up in his own house he shall pay nothing. If he be a married man he shall not only pay 130 thalers, but be imprisoned for six months and fed on bread and water."

72. "Should a man find his wife unfaithful and catch her in the act, he may kill both parties. Should the woman escape, she is expelled from our lands."

73. "Should a wife attempt to take the life of her husband and kill him, she shall be condemned to death. But she shall not be killed with weapons. Weapons are for those who carry them and know how to defend themselves."

He does not particularize the punishment, but even in my time there was a clear tradition that stoning was the suitable death for a woman. "She ought to be under the cursed stone heap," was a common expression. I heard it especially applied to the unhappy Queen Draga of Serbia. Vrchevitch records a strange case which occurred in the Bocche di Cattaro in 1770, in which a whole village stoned to death a young couple found guilty of intimate relations before marriage, even though the man wished to marry the girl. The parents of both had to throw the first stones. Medakovitch, writing in 1860, says: "Women are exempt from punishment except from the death penalty. The house-lord is liable for every crime of the womenfolk, and he or his relations must pay the fine for it. The Montenegrin, if he catches his wife in a crime, cuts her nose off, and in some cases will even kill her. The law condemns a woman to death for murder. A crowd gathers and each one hurls a stone at her till she is knocked down and overwhelmed with stones. Men are still living in whose time this hideous punishment was inflicted. In recent times it has not occurred."

Women were so entirely under the rule of their men that in the case of petty crime such as larceny it was doubtless more just to punish the house-lord, who profited by the theft. They were contemptuously spoken of as "long hair, short wits, a woman's head."

The cutting off the nose of an unfaithful wife was a recognized practice. Krsto used to lament to me that the law now forbade it. It was by far the simplest way, he said, to make sure no one would make love to her again. I was told that in the Serb village of Vraka, on Turkish territory, there was a woman living who had been thus treated, but I never saw her.

In one of the cases reported by Vrchevitch a peasant complains: "He threatened to cut off my nose as though I were a whore."

In early days, if one may judge by the ballads, the penalty was death in some terrible form. In *Gruitz's Faithless Wife*, Gruitz smears



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Maksimija with pitch and oil, half buries her in the ground, sets fire to her, and "drinks cold wine while she lights him as a lamp." In *Milosh Chobanin* we find: "I am not a whore that I should be burnt as a light." In the case of Tsar Stefan's daughter, he expels her, but threatens to tear her with wild horses should she dare return.

I heard a horrid Montenegrin ballad in which a woman is hewn in half and the unborn child writhes upon the floor. Krsto was fond of singing the ballad of Milosh of Drobnjak, which I wrote down and have never found in print. Milosh cuts his wife in four pieces, and strews them on the cross-roads as a "warning to other women who wish to take a second husband while the first is still alive." As the poor lady had been forcibly married to him and preferred the other man, it was hard on her, especially as Milosh, having thus avenged himself, lay down on his bed and died. Krsto and the friends to whom he sang it considered, however, that Milosh acted with the greatest propriety. I suggested that men be similarly treated, which horrified him, and he naïvely said it would never do, because then there would be hardly any men left in Montenegro.

### THEFT

77. "A man caught stealing for the third time shall be condemned to death. A man who kills a thief in the act of stealing shall be rewarded with 20 thalars, but must take care not to kill an innocent person, for he will then be reckoned an assassin."

78. "After the promulgation of this Code every thief shall be flogged. For stealing weapons, 100 blows; for a horse or ox, 50; for petty thefts up to the value of a sheep, 20. Children who pilfer in the house are excepted." Flogging had been long abolished when I was in Montenegro, and petty pilfering was becoming such a curse that many people were in favour of reintroducing it. I suffered more than once from thievery myself, but when I complained to the authorities was told: "Surely a rich Englishwoman should not mind losing a small sum like that!"

Under Danilo's Code (79): "Those who rob a church shall be punished by death"; likewise, "he who steals ammunition from the State or exports munitions of war."

82. "Any man may fire at and kill a murderer or thief and receive no punishment."

85. Shows the system of con-jurors. "Calumny shall be severely punished. No information shall be judged unless it be sworn to by one or more honest men who have never been condemned by law. Should the witnesses have suffered such condemnation their oath



will not be accepted, and others must be found. If the calumniator fail to prove his accusations he shall be punished in the same way as he has tried to cause the other to be punished." (If he has accused the other of horse-stealing, he shall be punished for horse-stealing.) Finally, of two adversaries, he who can find the greatest number of honourable men ready to swear with him shall be believed.

I have quoted fully from this Code because of the light it throws on the primitive customs. It is an attempt to reform tribal laws and customs which seem not to have been distinguishable from those of Lek Dukagini. Two more of special interest are:—

65. "If after to-day a Montenegrin or man of the Brda appears before justice with a stone tied to his neck, whether innocent or not he shall be subject to corporal punishment." This shows that until 1855 the Montenegrins were accustomed to swear their oaths upon a stone, as is still the case among the Albanian Malsori, and has been customary, too, in other lands. This law was meant to stamp out a pagan rite.

87. "The barbarous custom used by both men and women of cutting their hair, scratching their faces, and disfiguring themselves when someone dies are forbidden from this day, and everyone carrying on this practice shall pay 2 sequins for the first offence." This law was afterwards extended to a heavy fine for the whole bratstvo, or even the whole tribe. But the custom was not killed. Death ceremonies are among those that are most firmly fixed. I saw it done in 1907; and there was a blind woman living near Podgoritzza who was said to have torn out her eyes in mourning.

Tribal councils still sat when I was in Montenegro to decide about wood-cutting and pasture rights on the tribe common land, and other internal tribal business. One day, at Njegushi, I saw a crowd of men in hot dispute sitting in front of one of the churches, and asked what they were quarrelling about. It was the Sabor deciding wood-cutting rights. Wood was getting scarce; each year you had to go farther up the Lovchen for it. I pointed out that this was because they always cut and never planted, and the day would come when there was no wood at all. This seemed to have struck no one. They insisted that God plants trees; men do not. I said they did "kod nas" (with us). They retorted that wealthy Englishmen could do so. "We are poor men and cannot." I said it cost nothing but a little trouble. Young trees there were in plenty. All that was needed was to transplant them nearer to the village, fence them from the goats, and give them a little water till they were started. They pondered. "By God, this is true." I pursued the idea. Let each "house" in Njegushi plant twenty young trees. We reckoned how many this would be. Even if half died there

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would yet be in twenty years' time a large wood. They pondered again. "By God, it is true." But after a long pause added triumphantly, "We cannot do it. It is not our custom." ("Nije nash obitchaj!") The answer to everything—in most lands, including our own.

### 4. SUD DOBRIH LJUDI

In Montenegro the judgment given by the elders was known familiarly as Sud Dobrih Ljudi, the judgment of the Good Men. Vuk Vrchevitch<sup>1</sup> gives many actual cases. The object of almost all is either to stop a blood-feud or to prevent a quarrel developing into one; in fact, to establish peace by satisfying both parties. "An ill thing would it be," says one of the elders, "if one party to a trial went home singing and the other lamenting." In every case of "blood" quoted by him twenty-four elders are required, as by the law of Lek Dukagin.

In 1820 twenty-four sat to settle the following case:—

Milosh, the son of Nikola Vuchetitch, seduced Savina, daughter of Gjuro Rajkovitch. Milosh, when asked both by the pope and her relatives to marry the girl, refused with insults. Therefore Gjuro Rajkovitch, along with his brother and son, ambushed Milosh and killed him. The Vuchetitches then claimed blood, and threw all blame on the girl's father for not looking after her.

The twenty-four good men decided that the loss of a son on the one side is balanced by the ruin of a daughter on the other. Gjuro's "face is blackened." When the child is born, if Nikola refuses to take it and bring it up, then the expenses are to be divided between the two families. Two respectable persons of the village are to decide how much is needed, and this is to be paid till the child, if a boy, reaches the age of sixteen; or, if a girl, is married. (Girls were often married at thirteen or fourteen.)

In a case of theft from a church twelve elders sit. They judge that the heads of houses are answerable for the crimes committed by their offspring. The fathers of the two young thieves have to pay for the prayers to be offered in the church as expiation of the sacrilege committed, and the "house," so long as a male remains to it, is to give yearly to the Church two okas of wax and two of incense. The surviving thief (one already had died) is to pay the Church yearly a fleece of wool and four okas of oil.

The ceremony by which a blood-feud is stopped is described in detail. The following is a literal but somewhat condensed translation of a deposition made by a peasant in 1851:—

<sup>1</sup> *Narodne pripovesti i presude*,

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"Two years ago we celebrated the 'Karitad' (funeral feast) of the deceased Knezh Dumo. The whole village flocked to it and ate and drank all they could; and all at once two little boys started fighting like two cocks, and one of our 'odivas' (married women) rushed to protect her child, and the mother of the other one rushed up and hit her on the head with a stone. Down ran the blood, and both women began to shout awful accusations about each other's families. All our men rushed with weapons in their hands to protect their sister. The men of the other bratstvo rushed to protect theirs, and there was a terrible fight. We killed two of them and wounded two, and the woman who had started all the trouble was wounded also. My father was killed and I was badly wounded, and had the villagers not intervened there would have been a blood-bath. We buried the dead and carried home the wounded. Then the other bratstvo threatened me and my bratstvo about the two killed; and they owed us for one dead head and two wounded. In a few days the village gathered and wanted us to make peace. We sent men to them and asked for the first truce till St. Dmitri's Day (October 26th); and so soon as it came we asked for a second till Christmas, which they granted after much begging. At Christmas we asked, as is the custom, for both truce and arbitration ('kmetstvo')." [If a third truce were granted this meant that arbitration would be accepted. If a third truce were refused the feud raged as badly as ever.] "We fixed it for St. Sava's Day (January 14th). They gave us the names of twenty-four men, and off went I over wood and rock to beg them to come, and luckily none refused. St. Sava's Day came. I killed two oxen and six sheep, took four hams and bought two barrels of wine. I gathered together my bratstvo, my Kums, and my pobratims (sworn brothers), and, God forgive me, they helped me with money and bread, and so I had all that was needed. And the men sat down and gave judgment thus. They held the head of Nikola Perovo as equivalent to that of my dead father. The head of Gjuro Trpkov they valued at 120 zecchins. One of their wounded was held equivalent to my wounds and the other was valued as seven bloods" (one "blood" was 10 zecchins, i.e. about £5; the judges valued the wounds by this standard), "and that woman's wound was reckoned as three bloods. And they decreed that I should bring six infants" (in order that a man of the other bratstvo shall stand godfather to them and thus cement peace by a spiritual relationship), "and that I should hang the gun which fired the fatal shot round my neck and go on all fours for forty or fifty paces to the brother of the deceased Nikola Perova. I hung the gun to my neck and began to crawl towards him, crying: 'Take it, O Kum, in the name of God and St. John.' I had not gone ten paces when all the people jumped up and took off their caps and



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cried out as I did. And by God, though I had killed his brother, my humiliation horrified him, and his face flamed when so many people held their caps in their hands. He ran up and took the gun from my neck. He took me by my pigtail ('perchin') and raised me to my feet, and as he kissed me the tears ran down his face, and he said: 'Happy be our Kumstvo (Godfatherhood).' And when we had kissed I, too, wept and said: 'May our friends rejoice and our foes envy us.' And all the people thanked him. Then our married women carried up the six infants, and he kissed each of the six who were to be christened.

"Then all came to us and sat down to a full table." [They are waited on by the head of the house and his men, who do not sit down with the elders and the plaintiff. At the head of the table sits the most respected of the elders. After the meal he proposes the health of the new Kum and of the master of the house, and they drink to the newly established peace. The payment of the fine is then called for.] "'By God, my brother,' said my uncle, 'we have but little money. But we are a fine bunch of brethren, each with shining weapons. Here they are and here are you. Another time we shall do to you as you do to us. Here are the weapons. Take what your honour permits you.' Kum Nikola was indeed a man. He took the gun which had shot his brother and kissed it on the muzzle. The other weapons he gave back, saying: 'Take them, O Kum. I give them you as gift in return for the six Godfatherhoods; and I give you my brother for the gun.'"

The company then parted. The six children were christened and everyone went home.

The verdict shows clearly that the whole object is to balance the blood account. The question of who is guilty of starting the fray does not appear. The woman who threw the stone and drew first blood is not punished. On the contrary, her bratstvo is awarded compensation for her wound. The injured bratstvo, that is the one first attacked, is the one which appears as the guilty one, and is condemned to pay blood-gelt. That the fine is not enforced is due to the clemency of the other party—a clemency due doubtless to the fact that the case is a late one (1851), when the law of the mountains was beginning to yield to outside influence.

It was usual in all serious cases for the elders to order the man found guilty to provide a feast. Vrchevitch notes in one case that "The boiled meat of an ox and six roasted sheep and three horse-loads of bread and wine are to be brought before the church this day fortnight." And in another: "As the accused, by his foolish behaviour, has brought trouble on the village and taken up the time of us headmen on a working day, we decree that next Sunday he kill eleven sheep, and roast five and boil six, and bring two barrels of wine, and feast



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the headmen." In a land so poor of pasture that the supply of beasts was kept up by looting over the borders, the slaughter of so many was a very heavy fine. But behind the carnal joys of the feast lies possibly the rite of hospitality—the bond between host and guest as part of the reconciliation of the quarrel.

In a case of abduction Vrchevitch gives ten elders, and the pope, and the headman of the district, as the number to judge the case. The enraged father demands the price of "a head" for his outraged honour. The abductor wishes to marry the girl. The decree is that the young couple ask pardon of their parents publicly, that the youth chooses one of the Elders to be Kum, and that the wedding be at once celebrated. The girl's father is to give her her dower-chest, and the youth is to give his "in-laws" the usual gifts, and over and above give his mother-in-law new slippers and a bottle of raki, and to each of his brothers-in-law embroidered garters and a pair of particoloured socks; and must bring two skins of wine in which the whole village may drink his health.

In a case where two brothers quarrel about the house they have inherited, two elders and the pope adjudicate. They divide the house between the two. It has but one door; they are to make a second and share the expense. The yard is divided in half. There is but one mulberry-tree; it is cut down and two young ones planted. The stable and threshing-ground must be shared till new ones are made. Of the bee-hives, six are given to the elder brother, "as is customary when brothers separate."

These examples show how closely the procedure in the Bocche di Cattaro and Montenegro resembled that of the still extant Canon of Lek. The number of con-jurors and the subservience of all to the blood-customs are alike.

Vrchevitch notes the existence of yet cruder customs in his own time. He records a case in 1823 in which the accused offered to undergo ordeal by hot iron and says: "A piece of iron is made red-hot and thrown into a spring of water. He who takes the oath must at once take out the iron with his bare hand. If he be not burnt he is innocent. Many are not burnt. How it is I do not know." This remark shows the practice to have been common.

The ordeal by fire was found in force by the Abbé de Fortis at Pogliza (the Clissa district) in Dalmatia in 1778 among a curious self-governing group of people. He states: "The laws of the Poglizans and their procedure retain somewhat of the barbarous age in which they were compiled. . . . When a Poglizan is killed by one of his countrymen, the Count or Governor of the village, attended by the principal men, goes to the house of the murderer, and there they eat

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and drink and plunder what they like best. . . . If the murder is not attended by some atrocious circumstances, the penalty is forty dollars, which make about the value of eight zecchins. This is called *Karvarina*—that is, the price of blood. In former times murderers were condemned to be stoned to death, but at present they are liable only to pecuniary punishment because the great Count is unwilling to expose his own sentence to an appeal to the Governor-General of Dalmatia. Yet sometimes the criminal is stoned directly after the fact is committed and no time left to appeal. Proofs by fire and boiling water are still used among the people, and the victims are sometimes seen disabled and half-roasted. The Poglizans have another torture . . . they put splinters of pine between the flesh and nails of those accused of certain crimes, but never make use of any other species of wood because their statute prescribes this species alone. . . . They treat their women uncivilly and never speak of them without a preface of excuse. . . . Not many years ago they threatened the city of Almissa, stimulated by a spirit of revenge, making a descent in a large body . . . and there was necessity of using artillery to disperse them." It is clear that the Poglizans retained the old tribe law.

Old customs die hard. It was currently reported during the Balkan wars of 1912-13 that the torture of pine splinters was one of the many ways used by the Montenegrins to convert Moslems to Christianity; and at the time of writing (1927) the Macedonians state that students suspected of anti-Serb propaganda are arrested, and that needles are driven under their nails to force them to confess who are their confederates.

### 5. SERBIAN LAW

Serbian law, as known to us in the Canon of Stefan Dushan, differs radically from the tribe law of Montenegro and of Albania. In the latter case we have self-governing tribes upon their own land. In the former we find a feudalized society in which the nobles own large districts and have many class privileges, and the remainder of the population consists of serfs and slaves. The districts not owned by nobles belong to the Tsar or to the Serbian Church, which is given very great power.

The Canon was drawn up in 1349 in the form of 135 articles, to which 66 of less importance were added in 1354. We cannot here give more than the general import of these laws, and for details refer the student to Novakovitch's *Zakonik Stefana Dushana* (1898) and to Jirecek's *History of the Serbs*. We also gather much about the power of the nobles from the old ballads. Jirecek tells us that the South Slavs

anciently had no noble class. This naturally developed, as in other lands where a conqueror occupies a conquered nation, gives fat lands to leaders of the victorious army, and forces the defeated inhabitants to toil for the victor. By the tenth century a system of hereditary nobles had evolved.

Dushan's Canon shows it at its height. There are two noble classes:—

1. The Vlastelin, who owns wide lands, and in return has to give military service and bring a troop of armed men to the field.

2. The Voynik or Vlastelitich, a lower and later-formed class of noble. The curiously minute account in the ballads of the exact place accorded to various nobles at feasts and the quarrels over precedence show the high import then of rank and class.

Presumably to prevent fights, Stefan Dushan, in Law 56, ordains that any Vlastelin who comes to dinner when not invited, and any who has been invited and fails to come, must pay a fine of six oxen.

All beneath the noble rank were either serfs or slaves. The serfs (Sebri) were divided into two classes.

1. The Pariki, or Meropsi, who were tied to the land and severely punished if they tried to flee. The learned editors of the *Acta et Diplomata Res Albanie Illustrantia* explain “meropsi,” or “mjerop,” as “servus, ab alb. mjer, pauper, et rop, familia.” In modern Albanian “mier” means “poor” in the sense of pitiable: “poor man,” not necessarily meaning poverty-stricken. “Rob” means “prisoner,” or “slave,” literally. “Robt i shpiis” (literally, “captives or slaves of the house”) now means “servants.” “Me robite” is to go plundering and capturing. The same word occurs in Serbian. “Rob,” “a slave”; “robiti,” “to rob,” “to take slaves.” Its resemblance to “rapio,” “rape,” “rob,” “rauben,” “dérober” is obvious. There are so many other Serbian words for plundering and pillaging that this may be a borrowed one.

If the above derivation be correct the “merop” is the unhappy under-dog—the conquered.

In law, however, the “merop” is not a slave. The Meropsi lived in villages (“selo”) and were agricultural labourers as a whole, though Jirecek states they were sometimes cooks, bakers, and masons. They had to give labour and tribute to their lords, which was expressly defined by law. It was called “rabot,” a word now well known in England in the Czech form “robot.” Should their lord demand more work, they had the right to appeal to the Tsar for justice. That they sometimes did so is shown in the ballad *The Building of Ravanitzza* (Karadjitch, *Narodne Pesme*, vol. ii).

The father-in-law of Tsar Lazar, old Jug Bogdan, summons a thousand men to build the church at a fixed rate of pay and a ration of wine. He makes his nine ferocious sons, the Jugovitches, overseers.



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These hopeful youths consume both the wine and the pay themselves, and the workmen appeal to the Tsar, who is so enraged that he orders his nine brothers-in-law to be hanged and his father-in-law to have his eyes gouged out, his teeth extracted, his tongue torn out, and his body quartered. Fortunately the Tsar is induced to settle the matter less drastically. But when the ruler himself was the taskmaster appeals were useless. Another ballad tells how "Old Novak," weary of forced labour building the castle of George Brankovitch, Despot of Serbia, having worn out his cattle, cart, and patience, takes to the mountains and turns brigand. That others did so is probable, for the land was infested with brigands, against whom Dushan legislates.

In addition to "rabot," the serfs on a noble's land had to give military service. As certain Church lands were exempt from such service, Meropsi tried to escape into them. A special law made this punishable.

The "rabot" a Merop had to give to his lord was: two days a week to ploughing, reaping, sowing, and carting; one day in the year to haymaking and one to vineyard work. If there was no vineyard, one day to some other work. He thus gave 106 days a year, and also paid one perper or its value. Novakovitch gives as example the monastery of Prizren, whose serfs, in addition to work, had to pay per "house" a lambskin and thirty bundles of flax.

Law 70 decrees that "Brothers, father, and sons, living in one house and sharing bread and goods, must all give work, though they form but one hearth."

The lord of the land had to supply necessities for working it, but of this I have no details.

2. The second class of serfs, or "Sebri," consisted of the herdsmen, who pastured flocks on the mountains. They are separately mentioned as "Vlasi" and "Arbanasi."

The first, the Vlachs, were partially Serbized Roumans of mixed Illyrian and "Roman" blood, speaking a Latin dialect. Legions from various parts of the Roman Empire, especially from Asia Minor, served in the Balkans, and settled there when their term of service expired. That many—if any—of them were "Roman" in any sense, except that they were subjects of Rome and spoke a debased form of Latin, is improbable.

The second group, the Arbanasi, were the Albanians, who it appears had preserved their language. The mountain settlements of the herdsmen were called "katun," a name still used for the huts on the pasture lands of Montenegro and Albania. It occurs in Bulgarian and Rumanian, and is said to be akin to "cantonment," and the "canton" of Switzerland. It is not a Slavonic word.

The herdsmen were called "katunari." Herdsmen, says Jirecek, were



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much freer than the Meropsi. Though tied to the land, they preserved their own customs and managed their own affairs in the mountains. Being far from the master's eye, they were probably not interfered with so long as they supplied a sufficiency of cattle products. That the herdsmen were more unruly than the Meropsi is shown by Law 77. A fight between two villages of Meropsi is punished by a fine of fifty perpers. One between Vlasi or Arbanasi, by one hundred perpers. Half goes to the lord of the land and half to the Tsar.

Only a limited number of Arbanasi or Vlasi may repose with their flocks in a Meropsi village, lest they should cause trouble and fight each other.

The Serbs are said to have been forbidden to intermarry with them.

All serfs, both Meropsi and herdsmen, were forbidden to hold public meetings. The penalty for so doing was branding on the cheeks and the loss of both ears.

For any crime or breach of the law the serfs were tried and judged by their masters. Their own village affairs they regulated themselves by councils of headmen.

The legal punishments for serfs were in some cases more severe than those for nobles. A serf could be flogged or hanged when a noble was only fined. The noble had the right to exact hospitality from his serfs—for instance, when on a hunting party. But if he wilfully damaged the house or plundered it, he was punishable by law. Thus the serf had certain rights.

Below him was the slave ("otrok" or "rob"), a wretched being who had no right of appeal. The slave and his children were by law the hereditary property of the lord of the land for ever. They went with the estate, and could not be given in dowry. There was no legal limit to the amount or kind of work they could be made to do. Their names, as shown in documents, are Serb, Vlah, and Albanian—often the two latter. Some carried on trades, such as that of smith, which may be one of the reasons why the smith was so despised in the Balkans. Slaves were often prisoners of war, captured in a fight with a neighbouring noble or on the frontier. Even the monasteries bought slaves from pirates and other dealers.

Debtors could be captured and enslaved by their creditors.

Imprisonment is not a punishment inflicted by the Canon, but private individuals held many captives in their own dungeons, as the ballads show. Debtors were sometimes loaded with chains, unless ransomed by their relatives, and could be forced to work. Men who had lost civil rights through crime also became slaves.

Only the owner, or his wife or son, had power to free a slave. That these luckless beings were also sold is shown by Law 21: "If anyone sells a Christian to an unbeliever his hand shall be cut off and his

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tongue cut out." Christians, this implies, might buy and sell each other. Slaves, in fact, were exported to Ragusa and to Italy. Thus in 1274 Charles I of Sicily orders that all Albanian and Greek slaves in the district of Bari shall be liberated—men, women, and children—and freely permitted to depart whither they please.

Jirecek says: "When the Slavs occupied the Balkans a part of the inhabitants, especially the Illyrian and Rouman herdsmen, quickly made terms with the new rulers, but another portion fell into slavery."

Slaves living in a village with Meropsi had to pay part of the village's dues to its lord or work it out in "rabot." Anyone in misfortune, says Law 72, may appeal to the Tsar—except slaves.

The above summary shows a strongly marked class division.

A Serb nobility holds the land from the Tsar, save for that portion held by the Serbian Church, and both have in their power a great serf and slave population consisting largely of the conquered pre-Slav inhabitants of the land. The noble's land was called his "Bashtina." It passed from father to eldest son. On the death of the owner his war-horse and weapons went to the Tsar. His other property was heritable. No daughter could inherit a "Bashtina." In default of a son it went to the next heir male as far as cousin in the third degree. Failing this, it reverted presumably to the Tsar. Only for high treason could a "Bashtina" be confiscated. Serfs and slaves in large numbers belonged to the "Bashtina." Thus the monastery of Dechani possessed no less than forty villages ("selo") of Meropsi and nine "katuni" of Vlachs. Some further notes on Albanian serfs will be found under Albanian tribes.

Some details of Dushan's criminal law are of interest. The death penalty, says Jirecek, was unknown in earlier days among the Serbs, as each family carried out its own "osveta" (blood-vengeance). In Dushan's Canon (Law 96), "He who kills his father, mother, brother, or child shall be burnt to death." In such a case the crime is within the family, so there would be no one to carry out vengeance.

Law 95 punishes the murder of a bishop, monk, or pope with hanging. False coiners are burnt.

Though, says Jirecek, the question of murder was nominally reserved for the Tsar or King, in practice he had no power to stop "osveta." Dushan imposed blood-gelt. Law 87: "For accidentally killing, 300 perpers." Law 94: "A noble who kills a serf pays 1,000 perpers. A serf who kills a noble pays 300 and has both hands cut off." Mutilations were often ordered. One or both hands, the ears, nose, and tongue are cut off. Nor are nobles exempt. Law 53: "A Vlastelin who violates the wife or maiden daughter of a noble shall have both hands cut off and his nose slit." Other punishments were money fines and the bastinado.

The Tsar was supreme judge. Certain cases were referred to him,

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but he was usually replaced by subordinates. Nobles were judges on their own estates and monasteries upon theirs.

As in many lands, the system of con-jurors ("porota": judgment by oath) had existed from an early date. The number of con-jurors was fixed; according to the case, there were 24, 12, or 6. They must be peers of the accused, but not members of his family. This council debated before a higher functionary, and pronounced for the guilt or innocence of the accused by the oath of the majority. Dushan's Canon introduced new forms. It entrusted administration to "imperial judges" under the presidency of a "kefalia." These had no jurisdiction over the clergy, and appear to have judged only in cases of nobles and special cases; for Law 106 states that if the serving-man of a noble be accused of crime, the man in authority upon the estate shall judge him by oath, and, in case of a serf, make him undergo the ordeal of "the kettle," i.e. he had to take out at once a red-hot lump of iron cast into a cauldron of water.

That several written codes existed before Dushan's is shown by reference to earlier law in the Canon, and by frequent mention in the ballads of "ancient books" which are consulted on vexed questions.

Lack of space forbids further study of Dushan's Code, save to mention that it strives to put down highway robbery and to safeguard foreign merchants.





*SECTION III*

TATTOOING AND THE SYMBOLS TATTOOED

1. Tattooing in ancient days. Tattooing in Bosnia.
2. Ancient Sun symbols. Mithraism. Old Slavonic religion. Bogumilism.
3. Tattooing in Albania. Sun and Moon symbols in tattoos; on gravestones, woodcarving, embroidery, etc.
4. A Bird tradition in the Balkans.
5. Some Sun and Moon tales.

### SECTION III

## TATTOOING AND THE SYMBOLS TATTOOED

### I. TATTOOING IN ANCIENT DAYS. TATTOOING IN BOSNIA

TATTOOING was practised at a very early date in the Balkan peninsula. A vase in the Munich collection (*v. Daremburg and Saglio, Dic. Antiq.*, vol. iv, p. 104) shows two Thracian mænads tattooed on arms and legs with zigzags, a deer-like animal, and a rayed sun or star. Such an animal is tattooed on the arm of a woman attacking Orpheus on a vase in the Louvre.

The Greeks thought tattooing a barbarous custom. It was well known as the custom of certain Balkan tribes. Herodotus (Bk. v. ch. 6) says of the Thracians: "Tattooing marks among them noble birth, and the lack of it, low birth." Cicero (43 B.C.) thought tattooing a low trick. He tells of Alexander Pheræus, who, suspecting his wife, searched her room and "ordered a barbarian with a drawn sword, even one punctured with Thracian signs" to precede him (*De Off.*, vii. 25).

Plutarch suggests that the Thracians tattooed their women to punish them for killing Orpheus; but Cicero and Strabo make it clear that Thracian men, too, tattooed.

Strabo (*ob. A.D. 25*) says: "The Japodes, a mixed Celtic and Illyrian tribe inhabiting Mount Albius, which is the termination of the Alps, reach in one direction to the Pannonii and the Danube, and in another to the Adriatic. They are a warlike people and were completely subdued by Augustus . . . their armour is after the Celtic fashion. Their bodies are punctured like those of the Thracian and Illyrian people."

This important passage shows that at the beginning of the Christian era the inhabitants of all the districts with which we are dealing were tattooers. And the fragments of rude pottery figures of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages found at Gradac in Serbia, at Cucuteni in Rumania, at Sesklo in Thessaly, near Vidin and Philippopolis in Bulgaria, and also in the Siebengebirge (*v. Hoernes-Menghin, Urgeschichte der Bildenden Kunst in Europa*), many of which are covered with lines and patterns, show that at a very remote period the people of the Near East were either tattooed or painted. Especially the very fat female be-patterned all over from Philippopolis recalls Cicero's "Even one punctured with Thracian signs." That these figures appear to be all

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female, and that tattooing to-day is practised in the Balkans chiefly by women, may be but a coincidence.

About tattooing in Europe little has been written. Nowhere can I find record that at any time it was a Slavonic custom. As we have the above indubitable evidence that it was a custom of the Balkan peoples from the time of Herodotus (480 B.C.) till that of Strabo, and as the Slavs were late comers into the peninsula and were not settled there in mass till the seventh century A.D., we may fairly consider tattooing as a survival of pre-Roman and pre-Slav days.

To-day it is practised most elaborately in certain parts of Bosnia. It spreads southwards along the western side of the peninsula into South Albania, becoming less frequent and less elaborate. It is practised freely in Catholic districts and to some extent by the Moslems, and is abhorred by the Orthodox—a further indication that it is non-Slavonic. When I said in Montenegro that it was common in England, people were horrified. Pope Gjuro thought it very wrong of our bishops to permit what he called a horrid “Latin” custom.

But, as we have seen, tattooing was practised before the arrival of “Latins”; and the symbols tattooed appear to derive from very ancient days.

*The patterns and how they are made.*—Elaborate tattooing is found in Bosnia among the Catholics of Travnik, the Vrbas valley, the Bugojno district, at Kotor Varosh, and the Jaitza district. It extends as far north as Banjaluka.

Women are far more elaborately tattooed than men. Their arms and forearms are often covered with patterns. A few were tattooed on the sternum. One told me she was tattooed also on the shoulder. The inn-keeper at Bugojno told me she had had a servant who was tattooed on the shoulder; but in the crowds at the market-place I could not search for shoulders. The men had usually one or more tattooed finger-rings. Some were tattooed on the upper or forearm. Very few had such extensive patterns as the women.

At Bugojno the women were amused and let me draw their patterns. At Jaitza they disliked notice, and I had to get the patterns by ruse. The friendly ones said they tattooed “because it is our custom,” “because we are Catholics,” “because it is pretty,” and said my hands would be prettier tattooed. They explained that the patterns were pricked with a needle, and hurt so much you could do very little at a time. The colouring matter was gunpowder or soot mixed with saliva. Dr. Truhelka, then “custos” of the Serajevo Museum, the only man who has studied Bosnian tattooing (v. “Die Tatowirung bei der Katholiken Bosniens u.d. Hercegovina,” *Wissenschaftlichen Mittheilungen aus Bosniens*, vol. iv, 1896), told me the soot was that of resinous



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pine collected on a plate, and that honey and water as well as saliva was used as medium. Also that the pattern is sometimes cut in willow bark and stencilled on as guide.

Usually tattooing, said the women, was done by an old woman, who

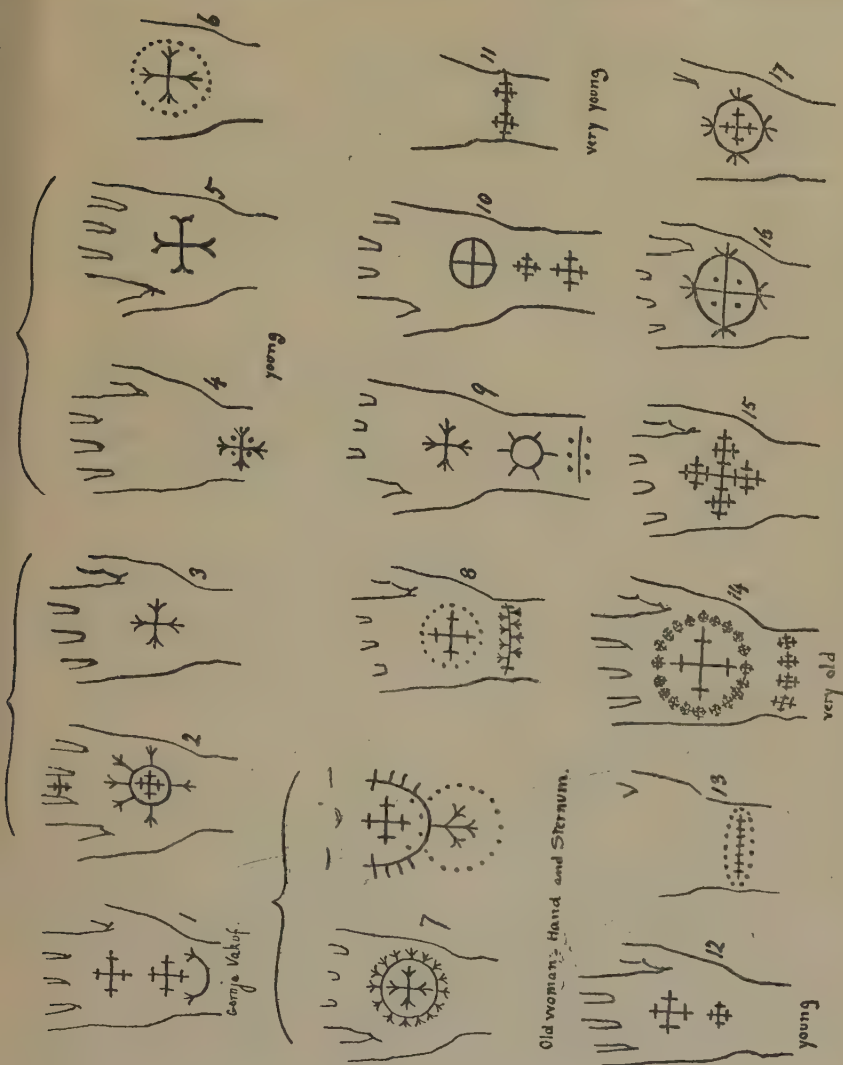


FIG. 3.—TATTOOED HANDS OF CATHOLIC WOMEN AT BUGOJNO, BOSNIA

NOTE.—Nos. 2, 7, 16, and 17 indicate that the "cross" has developed from a crescent on the end of a sun-ray. In No. 14 the sun and moon have evolved into a complete design of crosses. Compare these with the Prizren Sun (Fig. 12, No. 9).

knew the patterns. The first tattooing is always done thus. Later it may be added to by degrees by the patient herself or her friends. Owing to the habit of self-tattooing, the patterns of the left arm are often far more elaborate than those of the right.

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The military doctors told me that as arm-to-arm tattooing is practised without cleaning the needles, blood-poisoning and sup-puration often result, and contagious diseases are conveyed. The common use of saliva both as medium and as dressing is, of course, reprehensible.

All the women I questioned agreed that they had been first tattooed when growing up, i.e. between thirteen and sixteen. Thus tattooing is probably a survival of an ancient puberty rite. In every case this first tattooing had been done in the spring. Some gave me the date, St. Joseph's Day (March 19th), the eve of the Spring Solstice.

Dr. Truhelka found that the Annunciation (March 25th) and Palm Sunday also were tattooing days, but March 19th the commonest. The rite is thus connected with the spring-time of life, the spring of the year, the position of the Sun; and in the minds of all the women it was connected with religion.

The servant of my teacher of Serbian suffered intense pain from an inflamed arm. The teacher, being Orthodox, looked upon tattooing as an abhorrent Catholic practice, and said so. The girl replied: "Christ suffered for us; it is right we should suffer for Him"—showing thus a spirit of self-sacrifice, a spirit not to be lightly despised, however it show itself. The importance of the ceremony was testified by the women, who declared: "All the family comes to see it done."

They called the process to me "sharati" (to colour), and spoke of "sharené ruké" (coloured hands). Truhelka said that to him they called it "botzati" (to prick), or "sjechati" (to cut), and called the patterns "Krizh" or "Krizhevi" (cross, crosses), because some form of cross forms part of most Catholic tattoos, and the people definitely connect tattooing with their religion.

But that Catholic priests originated tattooing to mark their flock, as the Serb-Orthodox persistently declared to me, is quite untenable, as we know it existed in long pre-Christian days. Had it been thus introduced by priests we should find only Christian symbols tattooed, and not complicated designs in which a cross plays often but a small part and no other Christian emblem appears. The most probable explanation is that early mission priests countenanced and made use of the practice because the cross formed part of the ancient designs.

Truhelka ascertained that certain patterns were called by the women "Kolo" (the circle), "Klas" (ear of corn), "Ograda" (ring-fence), "Narukvotza" (bracelet), "Granchitza" (small twig), "Jelitza" (fir-tree), also Sun, Moon, and Star. He thence deduced that the patterns represent a form of Nature-worship and hearth-worship, taking Ograda to infer house and yard. He described the patterns as compounds of circles, semicircles, and crosses adorned with "twigs" and "lines" and

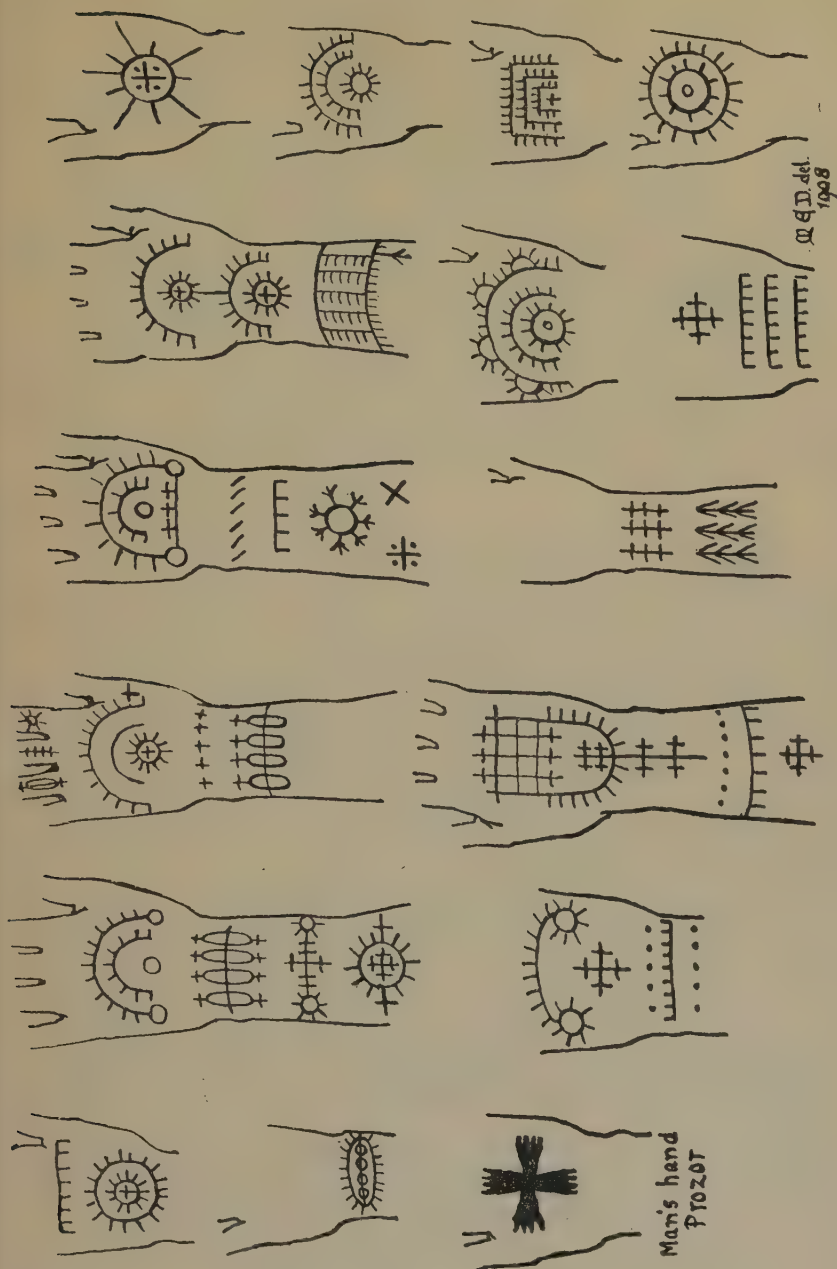


FIG. 4.—CATHOLIC WOMEN'S HANDS—JAITZE, BOSNIA

## *Some Tribal Origins, Laws, and Customs of the Balkans*

there left it, telling me emphatically no more could be learnt, for the people could give no further information.

Nor was it till two years later, in North Albania, that I suddenly lighted on what is probably the true explanation of these patterns.

On an old gravestone at Thethi-Shala I saw a roughly incised semicircle with the familiar "twigs" of the Bosnian tattoo. Asking, "What is that?" I was at once told, "Hana" (the Moon). "But what are all these little lines?" "The light coming from the Moon, of course." Marko was shocked that I, who had been to school, did not know that this was the way to represent light. They pointed out some carved rayed suns on the grave crosses. In England we are used to the rayed sun, but the rayed moon, especially a rayed crescent, is unknown to us, though the one convention is as reasonable as the other. Once having the clue of the rayed moon, the whole of the Bosnian tattoos become clear as compounds of rayed suns, moons, and crosses. Truhelka's "circles, semicircles, and lines or twigs," are explained.

### 2. SUN SYMBOLS. OLD RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Why should the sun and moon be marked thus on skins and graves? We must go a long way back in search of reasons.

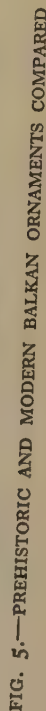
Prehistoric graves in Bosnia, notably those of Glasinatz, have yielded a number of bronze and iron crosses (v. Fig. 5). Some in the form of a four-spoked wheel with a circular centre; some in which the outer circle is broken and its arcs form crescent-shaped ends to the spokes (No. T. VIII); some in which there is no outer circle and the cross has four equal arms. One elaborate iron cross (No. T. 57) is adorned at the extremities with small ray-encircled balls.

The cross as a sun symbol—the four spokes representing the four quarters of the heavens and the wheel as a whole the movement of the sun through the heavens (according to old belief)—is long pre-Christian and is found in many other parts of the world. That it was common and popular in the Balkan peninsula is suggested by the fact that it is precisely the cross with four equal arms that was adopted by Byzantium as the Christian symbol and is known as "the Greek Cross."

Another ornament found in the Bosnian graves and in those of the Hallstadt period elsewhere is a brooch or clasp of bronze. It is circular. In one type a number of short rays project from a hemispherical centre. Each ray is tipped with a small ball (T. 1, T. 2). The whole suggests a rayed sun with a small sun (? full moon) tipping each ray. This is highly interesting, for it is still quite commonly made by Balkan silversmiths



in the form of earrings. I have bought it in Bosnia, the Herzegovina, and Serbia, and seen specimens from Bulgaria (Fig. 5, Modern). As the



silversmiths as a rule are of Vlah or Albanian origin it is possible that this design has come down directly from a very remote period. Strabo's

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statement that the Japodes are a partly Celtic tribe, and extend from the end of the Alps to Pannonia, is noteworthy, for this pattern, as a circle, or concentric circles, with knobs on the circumference, is found on pottery in the pile dwellings of Mondsee (East Alpine Copper Age). It appears also on Greek Bronze Age ware (*v. Hoernes Menghin, op cit.*, p. 331).

Another prehistoric Bosnian form of the ornament is a circle with the cross within it and more or less semicircular projections of the circumference. This again is similar to ornaments worn till recently by Montenegrin and Herzegovinian peasants.

Little is known of the religion of the early inhabitants of these districts. Jirecek, in his *History of the Serbs*, states that the gods of the Illyrians are named in some Roman inscriptions. Medaurus, a war-god on a fiery horse, swinging his weapon; a water and spring god, Bindus, among the Japodes; a goddess, Latra, of the Liburnians; also Lentona, Iria, and Ica in Istria.

Medaurus very probably survives to-day under the guise of Marko Kraljevitch. Historically he was a petty Serbian chieftain of the Prilep district, who served under the Turks against his Christian brethren when it paid him to do so. He was distinguished for wine-bibbing and blood-thirst. But popular imagination has attached to him the attributes of the ancient war-god. Marko of the fables rode a magic steed, whose hoof-prints are still shown on the rocks. He struck down a Vila from the sky with his war-club and, in short, has become a demi-god; and as such has wrought much evil. His fabulous and historic deeds have been sung far and wide, and every kind of savagery and drunkenness justified "because Marko did so." It was the excuse offered me when I denounced the cutting off of Turkish noses and lips by the Montenegrins in the war of 1912-13. Krsto almost adored Marko Kraljevitch, and when I said that had Marko now been alive I should have refused to marry him because of his nasty habits, Krsto, horrified, sulked for several days.

The water and spring god is possibly one of those for whom the now Christian ceremony of blessing the waters takes place.

Which of these gods were Illyrian, and which introduced by the invasion of the Celts (or Gauls) into the Balkans in the third century B.C., cannot now be determined.

The Romans brought a variety of cults—the gods of old Rome and some Oriental cults, especially that of Mithras. Finally Rome spread Christianity.

Mithraism, the worship of the unconquered sun, took strong hold in the Danube provinces, largely garrisoned by Oriental troops. Rome, pressing eastward, subdued vast populations, but could not assimilate

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them. Asia was not Romanized. Mentally and spiritually the conquered partially absorbed the conqueror, and Rome was Orientalized, and became yet more Orientalized, till the weight of the Orient broke the empire in twain and so separated the Balkan peninsula from Europe, that when the last invader from the East—the Turk—reached the gates, the Balkan peoples as a whole chose suzerainty under the Turk rather than union with Latin Europe. Space forbids us to try to trace the cultural effects on the empire of the many “barbarian” emperors, some of whom were of Balkan origin. But we must briefly indicate some of the sun and moon cults of the Balkans.

The chief of these was Mithraism. For details, Cumont’s great work on the subject should be consulted. Briefly, it originated in Persia. Mithra was the genius of Heavenly Light which drives away darkness and gives life and fertility. He fought ceaselessly the evil powers of darkness. He was the Unconquered Sun who brought victory to monarchs, and was thus the special god of the military. The great antiquity of the cult is shown by its fane being a grotto, or cave, and by its worshippers being disguised as animals (the lion and the raven). The conquests of Trajan, Lucius Verus, and Septimus Severus in the East brought Mithraism to the Latin world. Rome raised troops in all the conquered provinces, and transferred them to other districts. The whole of the northern part of the Balkan peninsula was thus garrisoned, as was also Rumania and much of Hungary (Moesia, Pannonia, Dacia) and Dalmatia. These troops brought Mithraism. It spread with great speed, possibly because, as we have seen, the existence of ancient sun-symbols indicates that a rude sun-cult already existed, and an elaboration of it was welcomed. Many sculptured remains found in Bosnia, Serbia, and Bulgaria—where it extended as far south as Sofia and Philippopolis—show its spread. The Asiatic troops appear to have landed on the (present) Rumanian or Bulgarian coast and to have ascended the Danube. Thence the cult spread southward, but never affected Greece.

Numbers of Oriental slaves also were employed by the Roman Government as subordinate clerks in the organizing of the Balkan districts. These, too, doubtless helped spread the new cult, which penetrated all ranks and reached the imperial throne.

Commodus (A.D. 180–92) was initiated into the mysteries of Mithra, and Aurelian (A.D. 270–5) instituted the official cult of Sol Invictus.

Sun-worship had meanwhile been further popularized in Rome in another form. Septimius Severus, of African origin, was proclaimed Emperor in A.D. 193 by his Pannonian troops. His wife, Julia Domna, was a Syrian from Emesa, where the sun was worshipped



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under the form of a conical black stone, said to have fallen from the sky. His son and successor, Caracalla, the savage offspring of African and Syrian blood, was murdered when on his way to the Temple of the Moon at Carrhæ in Syria.

Julia Domna died in misery. Her sister, Julia Mæsa, had a grandson, Bassianus, who was priest at the Temple of the Sun at Emesa. Emesa was full of Roman legionaries. The young priest posed as son of the murdered Caracalla. This and his fame as sun-priest made him a hero in the eyes of the soldiery, and they made him Emperor under the name of Elagabalus in A.D. 218. As Emperor he bore the sacred black stone in triumph to Rome, and through streets strewn with gold-dust took it to a temple on the Capitol.

In more than one form the sun-cult thus took great hold in the Roman Empire. After Commodus the emperors more and more identified themselves with the Unconquered Sun, took the title of "Invictus," and wore a crown with sun-rays. "Never," says Cumont, "was Europe nearer becoming Asiatic than in the third century, and at one time Cæsarism seemed about to become a Caliphate. The sun-cult spread ideas which tempted deified sovereigns to found an absolute monarchism."

The details of the cult are unknown. Mithras was represented by the sun by day and the moon by night.

A capital doctrine was Fatalism. The destinies of mankind were bound to the planets. The sun, as the greatest of them, influenced kings and emperors. Each day in the week was sacred to a planet, and many still are. (We retain Sunday and Monday, and the peoples speaking Latin languages many more.)

December 25th, the birthday of Sol Invictus, was especially holy, and is now fêted as Christmas. An immense mountain towered above the sun, moon, and stars, and was the home of the immortals. After death the spirits of light and darkness struggled for the soul, which, if it escaped darkness, rose first to the moon, and thence passed to the six other planets, to be cleansed before reaching eternal bliss.

Is the journey which the Albanian tribesman believes his soul to make after death a reminiscence of this? True, his journey is on earth, but the many beliefs which have swept the land since Mithraism may have modified the journey.

When this same tribesman cuts off four locks of his child's hair to the four quarters of the heavens, is he carrying out the ritual of dedication to the sun-god, to be confirmed at puberty by tattooing the sun-sign? We can give no certain answer; for of Mithraic ceremony we know but little, and of the prehistoric sun-cults—nothing.



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Of Mithraism it is recorded that seven degrees of initiation had to be passed through, of which the lowest was the raven, "so called," says Cumont, "because mythology made the raven the messenger of the sun." So much of pre-Slavonic is mixed with modern Balkan beliefs that one asks whether the ravens, who in the ballads bring warning of disaster and are greeted in God's name, are reminiscent of the days when the raven was the sun-god's servant? Krsto gave all the ravens we met a loud and friendly greeting.

Cumont states that the initiated were "signed" on the forehead with a permanent mark, "which appears to have been burnt with a red-hot iron."

In lands where tattooing was customary, was this mark tattooed?

Mithraism, having swept a large part of the empire, reached its height in the third century A.D., and flourished into the fourth. Its struggle with Christianity, which was destined to overpower it, had begun. Constantine the Great's adoption of Christianity as the State religion was its death-blow. Constantine himself, before taking this step, was a follower of Mithras, which accounts for the fact that his standard, "the Labarum," bears such a strong resemblance to the sun-wheel.

Didron (*v. Christian Iconography*) says: "The Church applied the art of antiquity to her own needs." Or, better, as Gaidoz puts it: "A conquering general established his headquarters on the place taken from the enemy."

The Greek cross—that with arms of equal length—is clearly not that of the Crucifixion. The speedy adoption of it as symbol of the Divine Saviour was possibly hastened by the fact that it was an already recognized divine symbol. The Latin cross, on the other hand, represents that of the Crucifixion.

After Constantine, Mithraism was crushed, and revived only for a short time under Julian the Apostate.

We must now consider two events which permanently affected the fate, not only of the Balkan peninsula but of all Christendom.

The first is the transference of the capital by Constantine from Rome to Byzantium. A Balkan man himself, he decided to break with Rome and its civilization and make Byzantium the ruling centre for the greater part of Europe—as then known. Europe would not, and did not, accept this; and has not yet accepted it. But all Europe has been deeply affected by it. At an early date it destroyed all hope of a united Christianity for Europe, and of a united culture. It created a still existent antagonism. The "Near East" strives to press westward, and the West to regain influence lost eastward; and the fact that the mass of the Slavs finally came under the influence of Byzantium has prevented

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them from becoming European in a cultural sense. The Slav mass stands as a huge block striding betwixt Europe and Asia, and belongs culturally to neither.

The invasion of the Slav into the Balkan peninsula is the second momentous event.

Christianity reached the western side of the peninsula—with which we are mainly concerned—at an early date, via the sea. Titus, St. Paul's disciple, went to Dalmatia. St. Paul himself preached the Gospel in Illyria. The Roman coast towns, Salona, Scutari, and Durazzo, were early centres from which Christianity radiated. The trip across Adria was a simple thing compared with the long journey to Byzantium. Illyria naturally formed part of the Patriarchate of Rome, and portions of Illyria have remained faithful to this day. Christianity thus penetrated the native populations from the coast, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that mission priests finding a population already tattooed with a cross as a holy sign encouraged them to retain it and taught them its holier meaning.

While Christianity was thus penetrating a land given over to sun-cult and other forms of paganism, its advance was rudely checked by the inrush of the pagan Slavs, who came in ever-increasing waves. Some of these invaders on the western side of the peninsula were converted by Roman priests from the coast towns between 642 and 731 (*v. Jirecek, Hist. Serb.*). The mass remained pagan, but even when the invasion became a flood Christianity was not destroyed, though, as Presbyter Diocleti says, "the Christians found themselves in great tribulation."

Procopius, writing about A.D. 560, thus describes this "tribulation": "The Slavs did not kill men with sword or lance or other customary way, but thrust them by force on to sharpened stakes till they died; or bound the poor wretches by hands and feet to four stakes driven into the ground, and beat them on the head as one might kill dogs or snakes. Others they shut in huts with the sheep and cattle they could not carry away and mercilessly burnt." He describes these Slavs as tall, strong, reddish-haired men, who worship a thunder-god to whom they sacrifice cattle and wood- and water-spirits.

Few details are recorded about the early beliefs of the South Slavs. But there is much information about those of the Northern Slavs—the Wends—in the chronicles of Adam of Bremen (*c.* 1075), Presbyter Helmoldus (*c.* 1170), and others, which is worth mention, for most authorities agree that similar beliefs and customs were common to the mass of the Slav peoples. The Slavs had thrust across North Europe and inhabited most of the land south of the Baltic. They reached the Elbe and pressed hard on both Dane and Saxon; and if

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unchecked would have doubtless flooded all West Europe. The Teuton, after centuries of struggle, turned the tide. The Slav was subdued and pressed back, and from the twelfth century till 1918 the Teuton was the bulwark between West Europe and the Slav mass. Since 1918 the Slav advance over Europe has begun again.

The Northern Slavs offered an obstinate resistance to Christianity, and it was not till the end of the twelfth century that the last of their idols was destroyed.

Both Adam and Helmoldus state that the Slavs worshipped numerous local gods by holy springs and in holy groves, which no Christian might pollute with his presence. Of these gods there were no images. Such a god was Prové, worshipped among sacred oaks near Oldenburg, whose priest was called Miké. Helmoldus describes how he helped to destroy this "place of profanation" in 1156.

The holy trees were surrounded by a wooden fence with two gates. The bishop, who led the party, tore down the emblems over the gates with a pole. "We entered the atrium, heaped the fence around the sacred trees, and, having set fire to a heap of wood, made a funeral pyre, not without dread lest we be overwhelmed by a tumult of the inhabitants." He describes the idols of some other gods as being carved with three or four heads. At Rethre (near Neu Strelitz) was "a temple constructed for demons, the chief of which is Redigast, whose image is adorned with gold, and his couch with purple."

Most honoured was Zuantevith (or Svatovit), at Arkona on Rugen island. All shrines were enclosed by wooden fences, sometimes also by moats. None might enter the atrium save the priests, the prince, and persons wishing to offer sacrifice. But persons in peril of death, seeking sanctuary, were rarely refused asylum. On certain days men, women, and children flocked to the shrines, driving sheep and cattle for sacrifice, and the priest gave judgments in the name of the god and announced his will. Adam of Bremen states that some Slav oracles were so celebrated that persons from all parts of the world—especially Spain and Greece—sought their replies.

At some shrines human victims were offered, especially Christian prisoners. A man, chosen by lot, was yearly sacrificed to Zuantevith, whose priest was as powerful as a king and who received offerings from all Slav lands. His jealously guarded shrine, being on an island, was the last pagan temple of the Wends to be destroyed. In June 1168, King Waldemaar of Denmark, with Saxon auxiliaries and aided by Slav forces under some of the Slav leaders of Pomerania and the Obotriti, who had become Christian, fell on Rugen. The Rugiani, helpless before such a force, offered the king what he pleased as ransom. He demanded their ancient image of Zuantevith. A rope was tied to



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its neck. It was dragged through the victorious army, beaten with rods, and flung into the fire before the eyes of the conquered Slavs. The shrine and religious objects were destroyed, and King Waldemaar carried off the treasure.

With the destruction of their last temple the Slavs, who had twice been "converted" and each time risen and massacred their Christian conquerors, were finally broken. Their lands were settled with Dutch and German immigrants, and paganism, though it doubtless lingered long in corners, was finally stamped out.

Space forbids further details. Neither Helmoldus nor Adam mentions sun or moon worship among the Slavs they knew. They say that some sort of a heavenly power was held to be supreme over all other gods. "He," says Helmoldus, "is almighty in the care of things celestial, and the others who obey him have proceeded from his blood; and that one is the more famed who is most nearly related to this god of gods." He says that Zuantevith is the most honoured of the gods, but does not expressly state if he is this *deus deorum*.

As to the meaning of the word "Zuantevith," or "Svatovit," there has been much controversy among Slav experts. Maciejowski (*Slavische Rechtsgeschichte*) states that "among the Slavs in pre-monarchical days all offences were wiped off by blood-vengeance, carried out by the injured party or his relatives. It was even believed that blood-vengeance was founded on religion (*v.* chapter on Blood-vengeance). Therefore on the Elbe and in Carinthia the Slavs worshipped a god of blood-vengeance called Vet, or Vit; the Holy ("svato") Vit of the Elbe Slavs. He was god of vengeance and victory."

Krek, on the other hand, in his *Introduction to Slav Literature*, says that "Svetovit was perhaps a deification of fresh air." The word was also interpreted as "holy light," but this Krek denies, and connects "vet" or "vit" with "vetr" (wind, air). He agrees with Helmoldus that the Slavs had a "deus deorum," but says this god was not Zuantevith, as Helmoldus implies, but "Svarog." This name he takes from a Slav MS. of the tenth century, translated or adapted from the Greek by one John Malalas. Krek derives "Svarog" from a word "suvar," or "svar," which he says means the sun, light, heaven; and he thence deduces the worship of holy light. The sun and fire he states were children of Svarog, and to these the South Slavs added the moon and the morning star. The sun was Dazhbog (the god that gives) or Svarovitch (son of Svarog).

Helmoldus tells that there were two kinds of gods—good gods and "Zerneboch" (black or bad gods). Krek adds that the good reigned in summer and the bad in winter.

Most, if not all, human races have feasted the return of the season



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that brings the crops, and done all they could to promote fertility. The Slavs, like the rest, fêted the various seasons.

Perun, the thunder god, was widely worshipped among the Slavs. He perhaps still survives as St. Elijah, the thunderer of the old ballads. Thewood-spirits survive as the Vilas, and the water-spirits are honoured—in disguise—in the Church ceremony of blessing the waters.

The tradition of human victims walled up in the foundations of buildings shows that the Southern as well as the Northern Slavs propitiated their gods with human sacrifices.

Thus, all authorities agree that the Slavs worshipped many gods. But none of the contemporary accounts indicates that the sun played a supreme part. He is the son of Svarog and a secondary character, in no way resembling the all-powerful Sol Invictus of Mithraism. And, as we have seen, the sun-cult was established in the Balkans before the advent of the Slavs.

An invasion and conquest rarely, if ever, means that the original population is at once annihilated and replaced by another. All investigation tends to show the great tenacity and viability of the original inhabitant, whose traits and habits survive though his language may be lost. The conquered is far too useful as a slave or serf for the victor to wish to exterminate him; and the conquered, being in his homeland, often recuperates to such an extent that he partially absorbs and largely influences the conqueror. How great is this danger to the conqueror has been shown again and again by the severe caste laws that have been made in most parts of the world to prevent the blood of the conqueror being defiled by marriage with the conquered. The very severity of such laws shows the difficulty of the problem.

Even when the conquest is made by a large tribal movement the invading forces almost certainly consist of more males than females. Moreover, in old days it was very usual to kill the adult males of the conquered and take captive the women and children. Inter-marriage with the women of the conquered, whether illicit or permitted, must have always played a great part in the remoulding of populations; for the woman hands on the lore of her own people to her children.

Before the recent invention of compulsory education it could be handed down for generations. It is only in the twentieth century that the system of denationalization, which tears a child from its parents and forcibly educates it, has been set to work, and made the lot of the conquered yet more pitiable. What will come of this latest form of "civilization" remains to be seen.

Be this as it may, the sun-cult was so firmly established among the Roman-Illyrian population of the Balkans that when the recently introduced Christianity was violently shaken, and in places destroyed,

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by the Slav invasion, it would be in no way surprising that the conquered population in the outlying parts—deprived of church and priest by the invaders—should revert to its ancient beliefs and the sun-cult should persist. It would, in fact, be akin to the beliefs of the Slavs and not inimical to them, as was Christianity. That it did persist is indicated by Jirecek, who says that the missionaries from Salonika, who began journeying inland in the ninth century, “converted the people, especially from the worship of the heavenly bodies.” He states, also, that some old documents of St. Naum (one of these missionaries, a follower of SS. Cyril and Methodius), found by Lavrov and published by him (in *Izvestija Russ. Akad.*, vol. iv, p. 11), tell that the Macedonian Slavs of those days worshipped stones and trees. This corresponds with Helmoldus, who says that after the conquest of the Northern Slavs in 1156 by the Saxons “the Slavs were in future forbidden to swear by trees, fountains, and stones.”

It is, therefore, probable that the traces of sun-cult in the Balkans derive not so much from the Slav invader as from the old Illyrian cults, intensified by Mithraism and other Roman sun-cults; for the tattoo pattern, still handed down by women to the younger generation, is often very like the designs upon Byzantine coins. The strong effect of Mithraism and the sun-cult in general upon the rulers of Byzantium is shown upon numbers of their coins. The Emperor or Empress wears a crown of sun-rays, and on the reverses are a variety of crosses combined with sun, moon, and stars. The British Museum coin catalogue furnishes many examples. A coin of Heraclius (A.D. 610) shows his head surmounted by a crescent and cross and flanked by a crescent and rayed sun (or star). Fig. 6 shows other examples. In these the cross, which began as a sun-wheel in the Balkans, is the most prominent, and a small sun appears at the end of each arm—or a crescent-like object, which may represent the moon or be a broken sun-wheel; and it is just these combinations of moon, sun, and cross that the Albanian tribesman still tattoos on his arm.

Mithraism died hard, and not before it had paved the way for another belief, which took hold in the Balkans with great rapidity.

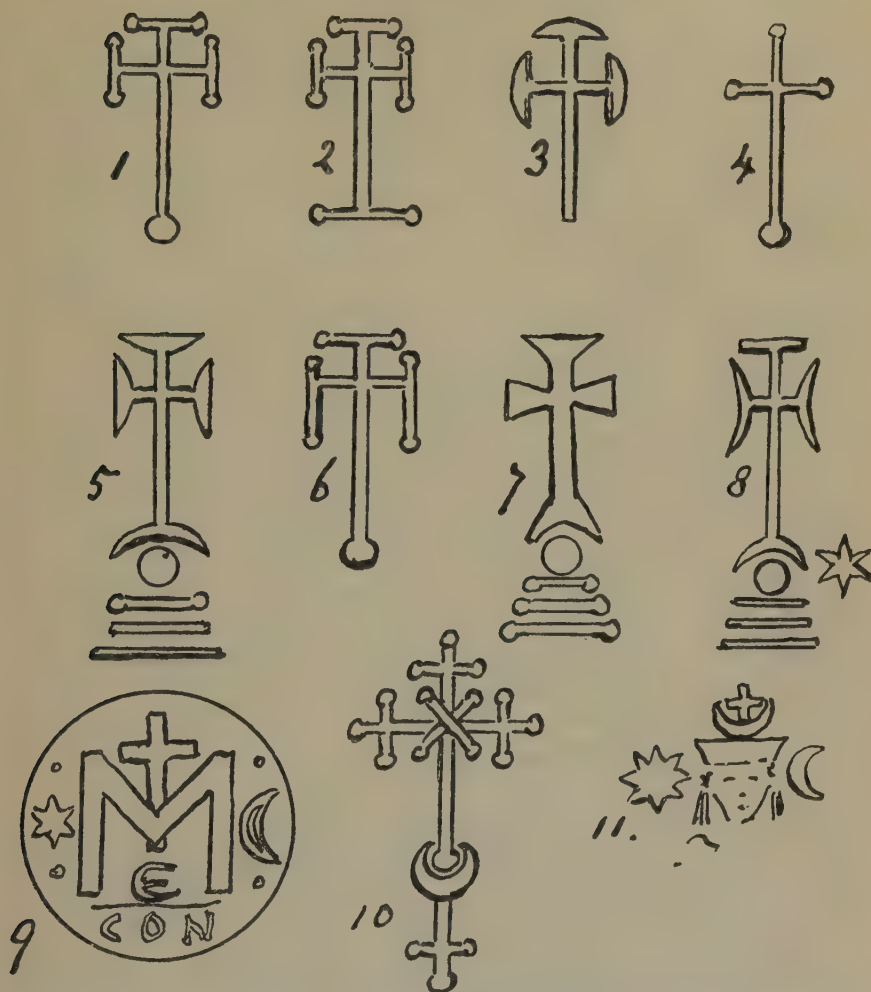
While Christianity was slowly penetrating the pagan Slavs, by means of SS. Cyril and Methodius and their missionary priests Naum, Zaum, Klement, and Gorazhda, in the ninth century, and before it had time to be firmly established, Manichæism, a strange compound of Sun-worship and Christianity, entered the land and spread rapidly through all the districts where Mithraism had flourished.

Manichæism originated towards the close of the third century at Samosata in Asia Minor. Its founder, Mani, tried to unite Persian dualism with some Buddhism and a distorted form of Christianity.

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For details Beausobre's book on Manichæism should be consulted. Briefly, an essential part of this faith was a belief in two antagonistic powers of Light and Darkness—spirit and matter. Man was created

### BYZANTINE CROSSES, SUNS AND MOONS



1. Anastasius II, A.D. 713. 2. Justinian II, 685-95. 3. Constantine IV, 668-85. 4, 7, 8, and 11. Heraclius, 610-41. 5 and 6. Constans II, 641-68. 9. Anastasius I, 491-518. 10. Michael VII, 1071.

FIG. 6.—DESIGNS ON BYZANTINE COINS RESEMBLING ALBANIAN TATTOO PATTERNS

by the power of Darkness, but contains some stolen particles of Light. Woman contains no particles of Light and is, therefore, an instrument of destruction. Christ was the efflux of the Power of Light and had His dwelling-place in the sun. To the sun were drawn those souls in whom



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the principle of Light prevailed, and they passed onward for ablution in the pure water that formed the moon. When the moon was full of souls they passed from it, thus accounting for the waxing and waning of the moon. Finally they dwell in a column of glory which is the perfect air. It is a column of Light because it is filled with perfect souls. The celestial bodies were witnesses of the great strife and took part in it. The spirits of evil were caught and bound to the stars. Hence the malign influence of the constellations and the destructive force of the elements. (In the form of astrology some of these beliefs still survive.) The Manichæans built no temples and raised no altars. They turned, when praying, to the sun by day and the moon by night. Like the Buddhists, they refused animal food. They were extremely ascetic and tolerated marriage only among the lower orders. On initiation they received three mystic seals on head, hand, and breast. The followers of Mithra, as we have noted, were also sealed. We may here ask again whether the tattooed suns and moons in Bosnia are connected with either or both beliefs?

Mani, the originator of this strange creed, suffered martyrdom. But his teaching lived and extended. Fiercely persecuted by Justinian II, Nicephorus, Michael I, and others, his followers revolted and wasted Asia Minor. Basil, the Macedonian, crushed them (A.D. 880). Already, in the middle of the eighth century, Constantine Copronymus had transported a large number of the Manichæans of the sect called the Paulicians to Thrace, and there settled them to be used as soldiery. In the tenth century John Zimisces settled another large colony near Philippopolis. This having been a centre of Mithraism, it is not surprising that Manichæism, which in some ways resembled it, took firm hold. In Bulgaria, which wavered long between Rome and Byzantium, the new creed spread fast. Its followers, known as Bogumils (Slav: dear to God), sent missionaries far and wide.

The Emperor Alexius (1081) tried to extirpate the Bogumils and burnt their leader before St. Sofia. Crushed, but not killed, the Bogumils spread westward into Bosnia, and by the twelfth century had made it their stronghold. Their tenets are imperfectly known, as we have them only from their enemies. Presbyter Cosmas, quoted by Hilferding, says: "These people are worse than demons. They say the world was created by an evil power; that there is another heavenly world created by God; that God had two sons—the elder, Satanael, rebelled and created matter. God then sent Christ, the younger, to help mankind fight evil." The Bogumils, it appears, refused all Church ceremonies as established. They forbade the use of images, and were very ascetic. The highest order, the Svrshiteli (finished or perfect), were celibate, drank no wine, and ate no meat. They were averse from taking life.



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Both men and women could join the "perfect order." In this they differed from Mithraism, which was, according to Cumont, a male and military cult in which women had no part.

The "perfect" went about preaching and doing good works. The mass of the people were simple believers. These might marry, and a man might dismiss his wife if not satisfied with her. This was one of the charges brought against the Bogumils by both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

Their head was "djed" (grandfather or elder). He had twelve disciples. In Bosnia they were attacked for heresy by the Hungarians and the Dalmatians in the twelfth century. But they became stronger and the Catholic Church lost ground. In 1180 Kulin Ban, chief of Bosnia, lapsed from the Catholic Church and turned Bogumil. He was induced to recant, only to relapse again. The Orthodox Church at this time appears to have had little hold in Bosnia. The Catholic Church, the old established one of the country, was severely hit when the Catholic bishop of Bosnia turned Bogumil. His palace at Kreshevo was burnt, and for a long time the bishops of Bosnia resided outside the country at Djakova, north of the Save. Bosnia stood completely outside the kingdom of Serbia. By this time Bosnia was, so far as is known, completely Serbophone. But its chiefs maintained their independence, and the Catholic portion of the population turned for aid rather to Catholic Dalmatia and Hungary than to Serbia. The Serbs wavered long as to which of the two Churches they would join after the schism. Finally they threw in their lot with Byzantium—not so much because they loved it, as for the purpose of setting up an independent Serbian Church, which under Rome could not be done. Tsar Dushan, in fact, planned to attack and capture Byzantium, and, had this wild scheme been realized, he would doubtless have taken control of its Church.

No Serbian ruler succeeded in incorporating Bosnia for long in his realm. Bogumilism and Catholicism separated it effectually from Orthodox Serbia. The Bogumils, who had been persecuted by both Churches, welcomed the Turks in many cases as allies; and both they and the Catholic dukes of the Herzegovina, who strove to enlarge their lands at the expense of the Serbs, thereby assisted the Turk in his conquest of the Balkans. A silversmith of Focha told me a long tale of his ancestor, who had guided the Turkish vanguard through the mountain passes.

Under Turkish rule many Bogumils, especially the landowners, are said to have turned Mohammedan. But until the time when Bosnia was taken from the Turks and handed to Austria by Europe, to be administered in 1878, this strange sect continued to exist. So far as

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I could learn when in Bosnia, the Catholic mission priests since then have converted the last remnants of the Bogumils.

Of the connection of the Bogumils with the Albigenses of France and the Cathars and Patarenes of Switzerland and Italy, space will not permit us to speak. But it is noteworthy that the Albigenses are recorded by Cardinal Conrad in 1223 to have been visited by "an anti-pope from the confines of Bulgaria and Croatia, to whom they flock in crowds and whom they consult as an oracle." The tenets of the Cathars of France, as given by Peyrot in his *Histoire des Albigeois*, correspond with those we have already given of the Bosnians. That they were regarded as the same is shown by Farlati in his *Illyricam Sacrum*, who, describing the condition of the Church in Bosnia in the thirteenth century, says: "The Albigenses, an execrable offshoot of the Manichæans, infected Bosnia, bordering on Dalmatia, with their wicked opinions and shameful deeds. . . . The people of Dalmatia, guided by the Bishop of Salona, kept this degraded mass of impure men restrained within the narrow passes of the Bosnian mountains by keeping strict watch."

It is possible that some of the rayed suns and crescent moons that figure in the coats of arms of various Provençal and Languedoc families are derived from the sun and moon of Manichæism. In the case of one such family I know, its ancestry is, in fact, traced from a man who came from Smederevo in the fourteenth century and belonged "to a strange religion."

We have now sufficient facts to account for the patterns of the Bosnian tattoos. (1) The oldest recorded inhabitants of these districts tattooed. (2) The prehistoric inhabitants have left bronze and iron sun-symbols. And, though one instance may be a mere coincidence, the tattooed Thracian woman on the vase is marked with a star or rayed sun. (3) Mithraism—a cult of the sun and the planets—flourished here. The only sculptured record of a Mithraic ritual meal was found at Konjitz. (4) Mithraism was at once followed by a form of Manichæism, which took a stronger hold here than in any other part of the Balkans.

Both tattooing and the symbols tattooed are pre-Christian and had a religious significance. As the cross formed part of them, the early missionaries from Rome did not suppress the custom, but emphasized the cross, which has consequently become in many cases the chief, or only surviving, part of the design.

But why is the custom abhorred by the Orthodox Church? Probably because, so far as Illyria had been Christianized before the coming of the pagan Slavs, it was Roman. In the long-drawn-out struggle between Byzantium and Rome, Rome never lost all ground. An outward and





PLATE IV

- (1) CRESCENT AND CROSS ORNAMENT  
(2) CRESCENTS AND STAR

Worn by Catholic women of Malsia e Madhe.  
NOTE—Here the “Suns” at the ends of the cross are replaced by coins and a pendant resembling the cowry shape. Both cross and crescent are covered with rayed balls.



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visible mark has a strong effect on primitive and childish minds—witness national flags and school and college colours. The missionizing “popes” of the Orthodox Church had every reason to denounce a practice which thus “sealed” part of the population and made it turn a deaf ear to the attractions of Byzantium.

To this day the object of the Orthodox is to wipe all that belongs to Rome from the peninsula. I found the bitterest dislike, even among the educated classes; and among the peasants neither side would admit that the other was Christian. In early days the struggle must have been even cruder than to-day.

### 3. TATTOOING IN ALBANIA

We will trace these symbols farther south. In North Albania I noticed that every Catholic woman among the five large tribes (Kastrati, Shkreli, Hoti, Gruda, and Klementi) wore, if not too poor, a large silver filigree crescent and star stitched to the crown of her flat cap; or a similar design was embroidered and the “star” then larger. Asked why they wore a Turkish symbol, they crossed themselves and denied the charge indignantly, saying: “We wear it because we always do. It is not Turkish. We are good Catholics.” They declared also it was “very old”; and were quite correct. For the sun and moon symbol, as we have seen, was long pre-Turkish in the Balkans. I next found that the bulk of these tribes-folk, both men and women, are tattooed on the back of the hand, the forearm, or the breast (seldom on all) with a cross; but never a plain cross. It has a crescent above and below it; or the arms terminate in small circles, as do those on Byzantine coins; or some in circles and some in crescents; or the cross is in the “sun-wheel” form. None of these people at all objected to showing the tattoos. I at once recognized in a simplified form the elements of the Bosnian designs. Most people said they did it because they were Catholics. Anxious to give a reason, one man said it was to ensure you Christian burial if you died abroad.

When I asked the Albanian tribesmen what was the meaning of the circle and crescent on the cross-arms, they said at once it was “Dielli”—the sun; and “Hana”—the moon. The cross was to show you were a Christian. What were the sun and moon for? The only reply was “per bukur” (for beauty). Often they laughed and gave none. Mgr. Ernesto Cozzy, then priest of Rechi and later Apostolic Delegate at Scutari, a Tyrolese whose knowledge of the mountain people was the result of years of sympathetic study, told me: “They have a number of curious pagan beliefs which they will not tell me. I have found that

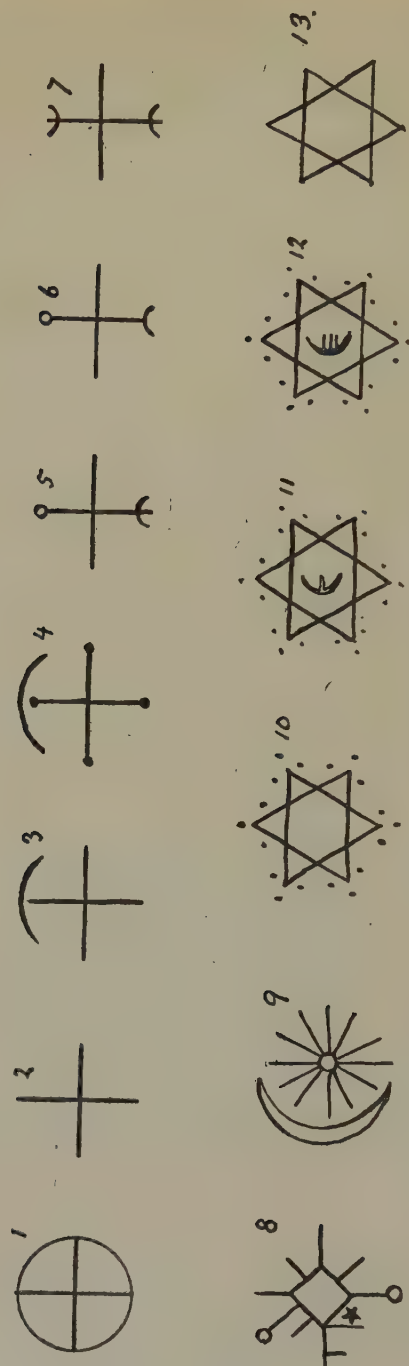


FIG. 7.—ALBANIAN TATTOO PATTERNS

1-7. Common tattoos of Catholic tribesmen. 8 and 9. Two curious tattoos on Catholic Souliques. 10 and 13. Moslem tattoos common in mountains and in Scutari. 11 and 12. Patterns common on Moslem houses.

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they believe in two powers, of Light and Darkness, which are in conflict—Good and Evil. These tattoos are in some way connected with it. So is the Serpent, which they sometimes tattoo and also draw on walls.”

I never saw a tattooed snake, but saw some carved on tombs. Mgr. Cozzy, whose work as priest and doctor was beyond all praise, died in 1926—a loss not only to the tribesmen but to science, for his pile of MS. notes on tribal customs was destroyed in the war years, and his probably unrivalled knowledge died with him.

This belief in the powers of Light and Darkness takes us back to Mithraism and Manichæism. That all the tribes believe in this struggle I first learnt in Nikaj, when the thunder crashed on the mountains and my Nikaj guide cried: “Drangoni is fighting Kulshedra.” Kulshedra is the evil female power who strives to destroy mankind with storms and floods. Drangoni is the good male power which hurls thunder and lightning and drives her back. As we have seen, the female, according to Mani, possessed but few particles of light and was an instrument of destruction.

The Manichæan belief is shown by Titus Bostrensis Episcopus, who, in *Adversos Manichæos*, tells of a Manichee “asserting strongly and wickedly alleging that the fruits of the earth are created by the sun, which he admires and honours exceedingly. He says that the overwhelming rainstorms are the defence of matter” (i.e. the wicked substance) “and work passionately against the powers of Good” (v. Migne, *Series Græca*, vol. xviii, p. 1195). The rain is the sweat of the evil power striving to destroy the good.

The belief in Kulshedra and Drangoni is found all through Northern and Central Albania. I do not know its southern limit. Drangoni can be a man or a male animal. If a boy is born with a feather under his armpit he will be a Drangoni; but his mother must tell no one or he will die at once. This accounts for the extremely small number of Drangonis who survive. I was told that St. George was a Drangoni, which may be the reason of his great popularity in the Balkans.

The Serb tradition that when it thunders and lightens St. Ilija is driving off the storm fiends is possibly another form of the same tale—Drangoni here taking the form of St. Ilija.

Thus deep in the mind of the peasant there lurks still a remnant of the Mithraic and Manichæan beliefs.

A point of interest about the tattoo patterns is that part of the Gruda tribe, the bulk of the Hoti, and all the Shkreli (v. Tribes) have a clear tradition of having migrated from places farther north to escape from the Turks. They insist that they were Catholic at the time of the ancestral migration, and may, therefore, descend from one of the northern districts of tattooed aborigines which early came under

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the influence of the Roman missionaries. Tattooing is not confined to tribes tracing northern origin, but is more marked among them.

Among the Pulati and Dukagini, who trace a different origin, tattooing is common but not universal, and takes the form often of

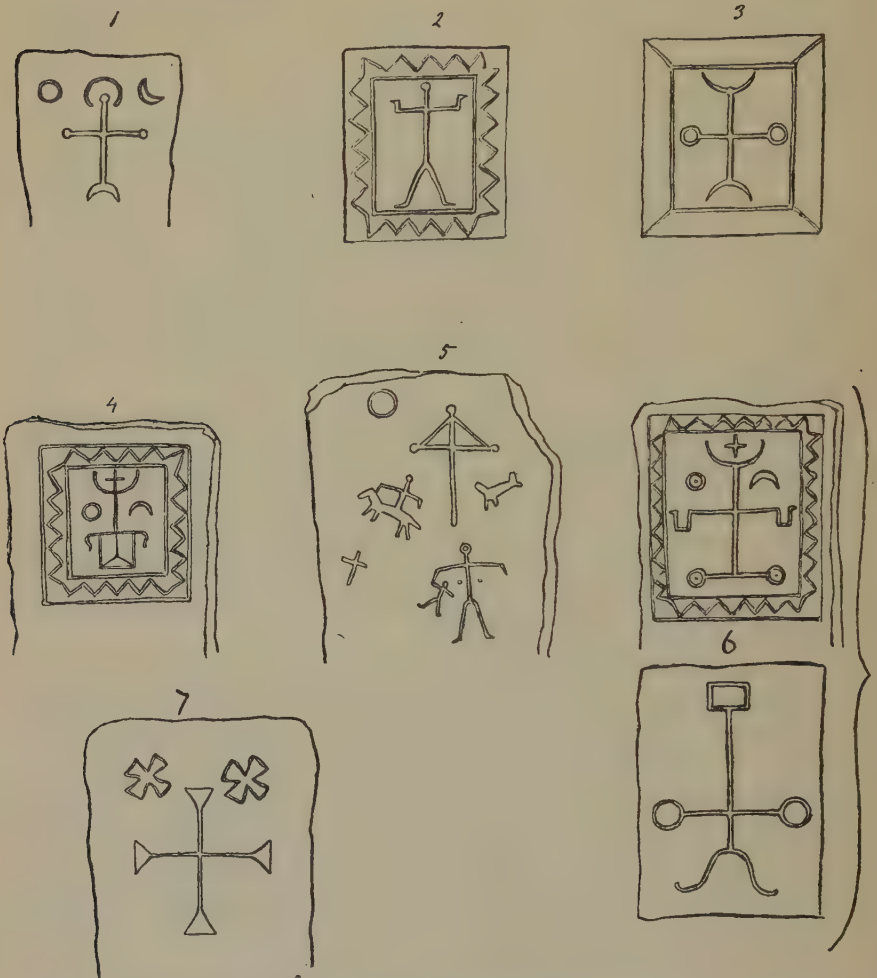


FIG. 8.—MODERN GRAVESTONES IN ROMAN CATHOLIC GRAVEYARD, DUSHMANI, NORTHERN ALBANIA

(Showing variants of Cross, Crescent, and Sun. All recent)

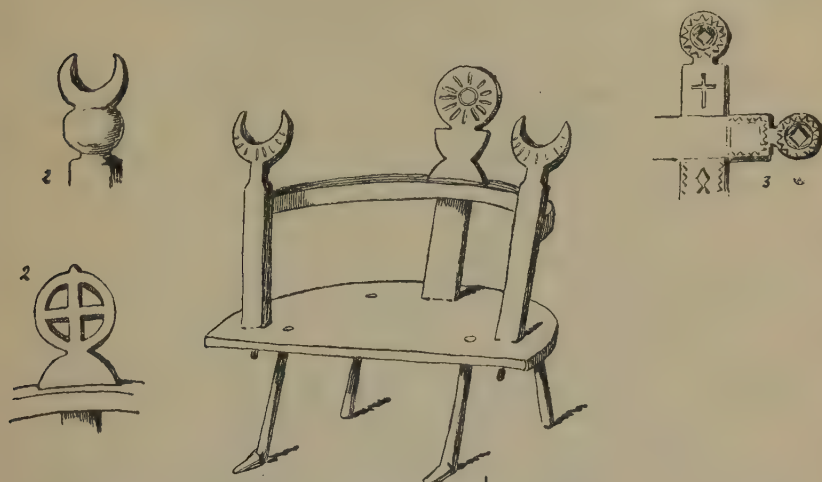
one tiny cross. I did not see a sun or moon tattoo, but found the sun and moon extremely common carved on graves, furniture, over doors, etc. Here the moon is carved as a semicircle with rays, just as shown in the Bosnian tattoos.



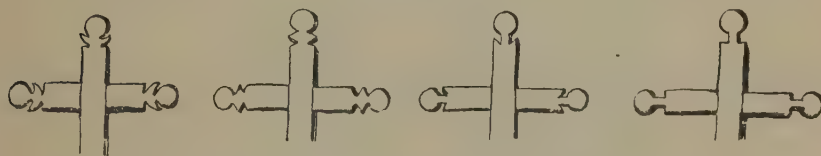
## *Tattooing and the Symbols Tattooed*

The finest carved rayed suns are those on the arms of the big wooden crosses in the Theti graveyard, which are beautifully chip-carved (Fig. 9, No. 3). Upon one of them a carved watch and chain marks the grave of the first tribesman of Thethi who possessed one.

Most interesting are some quite recent gravestones at Dushmani



1. "Sun and Moon" Chair, Shala. 2. Variant design of arm, end, and back. 3. Cross terminating in "suns," Thethi.



4. Series of common wooden crosses, showing all stages of patterning (Catholic cemeteries).



5. Wooden headpost and head and foot posts of Moslem graves (Hashi and Puka).

FIG. 9.—SUN AND MOON PATTERNS IN NORTH ALBANIA

(Fig. 8), whereon strange devices are carved, in some of which the cross and sun are turned into the figure of a man. A woman who came up told me I was drawing the grave of her mother (Fig. 8, No. 6). Asked what was the meaning of the things upon it, she said: "We poor people of the mountains cannot write. I put this to remember my mother. The sun and moon are 'per bukur' (to look pretty)."



FIG. 10.—BIRD AND SERPENT DESIGN ON SCUTARI  
WOMAN'S CLOAK

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The large uncarved wooden crosses in most of the graveyards of Dukagini and Pulati (Fig. 9) show at the ends of the arms either (1) a sun and crescent, (2) a sun alone, or (3) a sun with two notches below it—a transition form in which the carpenter has forgotten what the crescent is and merely chopped notches. The sun-wheel forms the back and the crescent and sun the ends of the arms of the typical wooden arm-chair in which the house-lord sits. Such chairs were used by all the tribes, but are now chiefly found in the further Dukagini tribes. The chip-carved distaffs of the women show the cross frequently; but chip-carving does not lend itself to curves, and the moon appears as an angle on which the cross stands. Some distaffs, however, suggest that their complicated designs are based on rayed curves, though they are now angular.

The cross and rayed sun are also traceable on many of the elaborately knitted socks. Here, owing to the exigencies of the material, the sun is square, but the rays are duly shown.

A rayed sun is part of the elaborate design embroidered on the scarlet cloak of the married Catholic women of Scutari. Of this design, which with variations consists always of similar elements, I have failed to find an explanation. "It must be some old story which we have forgotten," say the embroiderers, who are always men. The sun, an ear of wheat (? feather), a flowering plant, the dove and the serpent always appear. It is given to the bride by the bridegroom on her wedding-day. The sun, the wheat, and the flowers suggest fertility. And the facts that the serpent and dove were symbols of the mother goddess worshipped at Knossos, and that bird and serpent played an important part in Egyptian mythology, show that the origin of this Albanian pattern is, indeed, so old that it is no wonder the embroiderers have forgotten it (Figs. 10 and 11).

The sun and moon were firmly established as symbols in the Balkans long before the Turk arrived. I think that probably the Turkish crescent and star is really the rayed sun and moon, the sun being diminished so as to fit decoratively within the crescent.

On the wall of a house at Vuthaj, when the district was wholly Moslem and almost closed to outsiders, I saw, in 1908, a large rayed sun painted with a slim crescent beside it (Fig. 12, No. 10). More striking yet was the emblem at that time placed over the gate of the Turkish Konak at Prizren. It was a large wooden sun with long rays of unequal length. At the tip of each ray was a small wooden crescent. At this time there was huge excitement over the proclamation of the Turkish Constitution, and I was warned neither to draw nor photograph anything in public. I made, therefore, only a memory sketch (Fig. 12, No. 9), but it gives a correct idea of this curious sign, which, as the



FIG. 11.—BIRD AND SERPENT DESIGN







PLATE V.—MONTENEGRIN DANCE



PLATE VI.—KRSTO AND IKÉ (GUSLE-PLAYING)

## *Tattooing and the Symbols Tattooed*

place has been given to the Jugoslavs, has doubtless been destroyed. Here beyond doubt the Turkish "star" is the sun. The crescents at the ray-tips suggest that many of the "twigs" of the Bosnian tattoos are really tiny crescents at the end of rays, and have in many cases been evolved into crosses.

We have examined tattooing and sun-symbols among the Catholics. The Moslems of Bosnia, according to Truhelka, occasionally tattoo. I saw no examples myself.

But among the Moslems of North Albania tattooing is common. In the entirely Moslem districts of Hasi, Vuthaj, Arnji, and by the Moslems of Luria it was not easy to make any investigation, and impossible to ask questions. The population received me kindly as the only female foreigner who had ever visited them. But the "giaour" was suspected of being the forerunner of foreign annexation, and any questions regarding beliefs would have led to difficulties and probably closed the route to me. I could only observe and make secret notes. I saw many tattooed Moslems in these districts but never a tattooed crescent and star. All, both here and at Scutari, were marked with a triangle, and sometimes with an Arabic inscription. Or with a double triangle—which forms a star and is, I suppose, the substitute for the rayed sun. This same triangle or double triangle (Fig. 7, Nos. 10-13) is commonly painted on Moslem houses both up-country and in Scutari, where it sometimes contains a crescent within it. Oddly enough, the only time I saw the crescent and rayed sun (or star) without a cross as a tattoo it was on the hand of an old Catholic in Scutari (Fig. 12, No. 9).

But though the up-country Moslem does not tattoo the sun and crescent (probably because the Christians tattoo them along with the cross), he cuts them out of wood—a circle for the sun and a sickle-shaped piece for the moon—and plants them at head and foot of his graves. Or the circle with a crescent below is cut in one piece and used as headpost (Fig. 9, No. 5). The Moslem Albanian, in fact, on quitting Christianity has rejected the cross but retained the ancient religious symbols of his pre-Christian ancestors—the sun and moon. He has not, except in the towns which were under Turkish influence, adopted the well-known Turkish gravestone with turban or fez upon it.

Emerging from these Moslem tribes I was amused to find that at Prizren, which was then by large majority Albanian, the sun and moon figured over the door of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In Montenegro, traces of sun and moon can be found. The arms of the solid stone crosses usual in the graveyards end as a rule in hemispheres. Limestone is hard to tackle and no moon appears. When, however, a cross is carved in relief on a slab the moon appears as a

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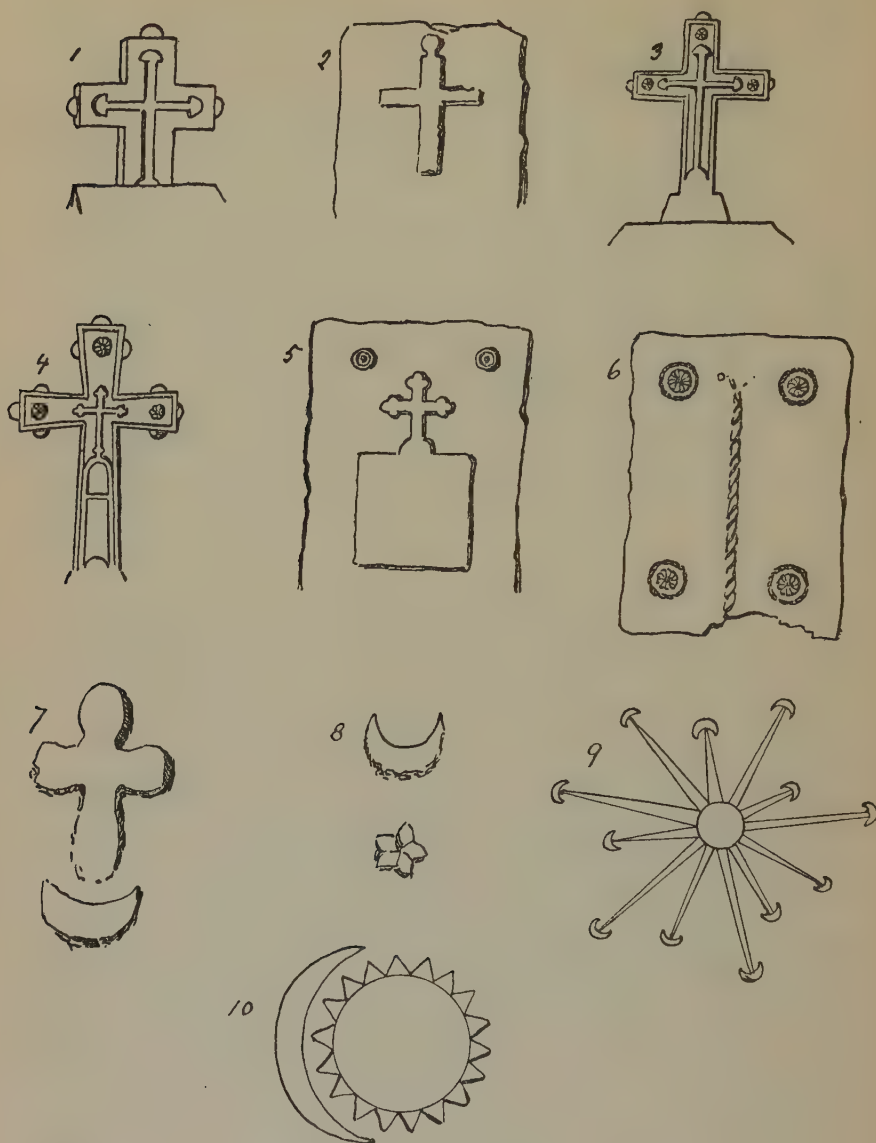


FIG. 12.—MONTENEGRIN AND ALBANIAN SUN AND MOON DESIGNS

1-5. Modern Montenegrin gravestones, showing sun-and-moon cross. 6-8. Mediæval gravestones at Stolatz, Herzegovina, ascribed to Bogumil period. 9. Wooden sun with crescents on the Konak at Prizren (1908). 10. Rayed sun and crescent on Moslem house at Vulthaj.



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crescent upon which the cross stands and the half-sphere is clearly the sun. The design is, in fact, much like some of the Albanian tattoos (v. Fig. 7). The sun-circle on the cross is common also upon graves much nearer home, but into its history we cannot now enter.

A trace of Bogumilism (or Manichæism) among the Montenegrins especially, but among other of the Serb-speaking peoples also, is probably the custom of apologizing for the existence of a wife: "Moja zhenà da oprostish"(My wife, if you will forgive me), the formula which, till recently, was always used when a man had to indicate his wife's existence. Marriage among the Bogumils was permitted only among the lower order, and the married, it appears, were the lowly, and served the "Perfect," who were celibate. It seems probable that it was when Bogumilism flourished that the custom of apologizing for the existence of a wife arose. This is indicated by a note of Vuk Karadjitch to the well-known ballad of the Maiden of Kosovo. The wounded warrior asks the maiden who is wandering on the battlefield: "Art thou searching for thy brother or thy cousin, or thy old *father through sin?*" She replies that she seeks neither brother, cousin, nor old father through sin. Vuk explains: "father through sin means real father. This shows the popular belief that marriage was a sin. I have heard a great chief say of his son: 'He is my son through sin.'" The Manichæan theory that woman is compounded of evil and devoid of particles of Light may lurk behind the Montenegrins' (and other South Slavs') disgust at the birth of a daughter and contemptuous treatment of women. All beliefs that take a strong hold upon a people as a rule leave some sort of a "mental scar."

### 4. A BIRD TRADITION IN THE BALKAN PENINSULA

It is noteworthy that even to-day a large proportion of the people who live in the districts we are considering identify themselves with birds, and a mass of traditional ballads shows that the custom is ancient.

The Albanians call themselves Shkypetars, their language Shkyp, and their land Shkyperia or Shkypnia. This they derive from "shkyp," an eagle; and say, "We are the sons of the eagle, our land is the land of the eagle." Beyond a vague idea that to kill an eagle is unlucky I could learn nothing about it; but in Plutarch's *Life of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus*, who is still a popular hero in Albania, we are told that after his great victory over the Macedonians his Epirots hailed him as "The Eagle." Skenderbeg, the mediæval chieftain, adopted the eagle for his banner, and the eagle is the crest of the newly formed Albanian State.

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In Montenegro the bird tradition is still very strong. As all maps, up to the end of the eighteenth century and, indeed, into the nineteenth, include Montenegro in Albania, and as much of the tribal law and custom was the same in both lands till recently, it is not surprising that all Montenegrins, too, are birds, but in this case falcons ("soko," pl. "sokolovi"). Krsto hailed every man we met on the road: "Whither goest thou, O falcon?" or "Onward, O falcons" ("Naprijed sokolovi!"); officers as a rule addressed their men as "Moji sokolovi" ("My falcons"). It was an everyday expression. Commonly used, too, is the verb derived from "soko"—"sokoliti" (to urge on, to incite). Soko and Sokol, and their derivatives Sokolitch and Sokolovitch, are common names.

In Montenegro there is a popular dance which seems to be unknown in Serbia. A pair or two pairs of dancers stand opposite to each other and dance at each other, retiring, advancing, and performing various steps, and finally leaping into the air as high as possible, flapping their arms and yelling wildly. The flapping, yelling dancer is said to represent an eagle or falcon. Danced at night by a big bonfire it is extraordinarily wild and picturesque, and the effect is heightened by firing the revolver when the dancer is at the height of his leap. I once saw this danced by an Albanian tribesman and was told the dance was also Albanian. The Albanian tribesmen, however, very rarely dance, whereas the Montenegrin rarely misses a chance of doing so.

At the Balkan States Exhibition in 1907, when the Montenegrins danced this, the Serb Commissioner and peasants looked on amazed and asked: "What are they doing?" The dance was unknown to them. It is noteworthy that the Serbian "kolo" and Bulgarian "hora," in which the dancers join hands and make a large circle, has been said to be a sun-dance.

In Montenegro, when wailing at a funeral, as is customary, the men, on approaching the house of the deceased, cry:—

Zhao mi za tebé  
Moj' krilati braté!

(Woe is me for thee  
O my wingèd brother!)

No one would explain to me why "wingèd," and at first I supposed it meant an angel. But, taken with other facts, I think it means that the man was a "soko," a brave man, entitled, as we shall see, to wear plumes. The use of the word "soko" for a fighting man is so common in Montenegrin songs that whole pages could easily be filled with quotations. Grand Voyvoda Mirko, father of the late King Nikola of Montenegro, a wild tribesman whose life consisted of border fights, with intervals of singing songs about them, supplies any amount of examples in his

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*Junatchki Spomenik*, composed about the fights between 1852 and 1862. "Voyvoda Jovo was drinking wine in his tower at Banyani. With him were three hundred falcons. . . . Among them two grey falcons, heroes both, Sirdar Stepan Radojev and Sirdar Djoko of Banjani." In another the Kapetan cries: "The Turks have broken faith and have killed that grey falcon, Pope Radosav. . . . Up with ye, my falcons; let us go to avenge him," etc. Briefly, almost everyone is a falcon and the leaders urge on ("sokoliti") their men. The thing becomes comical when "three grey falcons sat drinking wine at an inn." I have heard a love-song yelled: "Thou art the swallow-bird—I am the grey falcon"—that will swoop and carry you off.

The use of the term "soko" to mean a warrior is very much more common in Montenegrin ballads than in Serbian ones. In the whole collection of ballads about the rising of Karageorge at the beginning of the nineteenth century I have scarcely found one example.

In the ancient ballads of the South Slavs are some curious facts about falcons. They carry important messages to chieftains. In the best collection of Montenegrin ballads, *Ogledalo Srpsko*, we find "The Sons of Ivan Beg" (circa 1510). Ivan Tzrnojevitch, Prince of Montenegro, drinks wine at Cattaro with some comrades. A grey falcon flies up. The Montenegrins try to catch it, but it escapes them. Ivan then wraps his cloak round his shoulder and calls the falcon, which alights on his shoulder and gives him, from under its wing, a letter which it has brought from Constantinople. Ivan addresses the falcon as "Thou black news-carrier," and they converse about Ivan's renegade son, Stanisha.

Similarly, a falcon appears in one of the Kosovo songs (*v. Vuk Karadjitch*): "A falcon, that grey bird, flew from Holy Jerusalem and carried a little swallow. This was not a grey falcon, but holy St. Elijah. He did not carry a swallow but a letter from the Holy Mother of God." This letter tells King Lazar how by losing the coming battle of Kosovo he may save his own soul, which he accordingly does!

Among the songs about the popular hero, Marko Kraljevitch, is much about the falcon. Marko, of course, is referred to as a falcon. Two songs tell of the love between him and a falcon. Kraljevitch Marko fell sorely ill by the wayside. He thrust his spear in the ground and tied his horse, Sharatz, to it. And Marko cried aloud: "Who will bring me water to drink? Who will make shade for me?" Down there came a grey falcon and brought water in its beak and spread its wings over him. . . . And Marko said: "O falcon, my grey bird, what good have I done thee that thou shouldst bring water and make shade for me?" And the falcon replied: "Do not be silly, Marko! When we were in the fight at Kosovo the Turks took me and cut my wings. Then didst thou take me and set me upon a green fir-tree, that the Turks' horses



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might not trample me, and thou fedst me with the flesh of heroes and gavest me blood to drink. Thus hast thou done me a good deed." In another version the bird is an eagle. Marko saves it from the battle and saves its nestlings from a burning tower, and feeds them "for a month and one week more."

In a third song Marko goes hawking with the Turks and flies his falcon at a duck. A Turk shoots it with an arrow and breaks its wing. The wounded bird settles on Marko's shoulder. They talk together as brethren. "How art thou, my falcon, without a wing?" asks Marko. "I am like one that hath no brother. Had I a born brother I would not lament my wing, for he would avenge me," said the falcon.

Then cried Marko: "Fear not, my grey falcon. An thou hast no brother, thou hast Marko, who will be no worse than a brother to thee." On reaching home Marko sends for a doctor, who dresses the falcon's wound. News comes that seventy Turks have harried a neighbouring village. Marko single-handed kills them all and returning, remarks: "Fear not, my falcon. Thou knowest thou hast a brother! So long as Marko lives the Turks will never forget thy wing."

Now Marko, who lived near the end of the fourteenth century, was son of Vukashin, lord of Scutari in Albania (at that time included in the Serbian Empire), and his mother, says tradition, was abducted from a mountain tribe on Durmitor. Thus he hails from the very district where the falcon legend still prevails. The Durmitor tribes are said to be of Vlah origin.

In the ballad of *Tsar Stefan's Daughter and Childe Jovan* (v. Karadjitch, *Narodne Pesme*) we have a reminiscence of descent from a falcon. The following is a very condensed version. The real Tsar Stefan lived in the first half of the fourteenth century. His name has obviously been tacked on to a very ancient legend. Tsar Stefan's daughter, Militza, is famed for beauty. "Militza had grown up in a cage for fifteen years." Nevertheless, rumour says she is pregnant. The Tsar hears this, sends for her, and demands by whom she is pregnant. At first she is silent. Then the Tsar promises not to harm her, and she tells that early one morning she took the crown and went out on to the roof and put the crown on her head. The rays of the rising sun struck the crown, and from the crown the rays flashed over Prizren to the Shar mountains and Mount Jastreb, where the falcons dwell and the white Vilas. Militza went back into her tower, and when night fell there came a great falcon and seven swans from Jastreb. The swans settled on the tower, the falcon at the window. The tower rocked, light streamed from the falcon, and the golden cage was as light by night as by day. The falcon turned to a youth and passed the night in the tower. At dawn he flew away and never returned. On hearing



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this Tsar Stefan ordered his daughter to seek her lover and never come back. If she did, she should be torn by wild horses. After some adventures she meets a falcon, who directs her to Orlujevatz (town of the eagle), telling her that there are many towers covered with brass. On the highest is a golden ball (lit., apple) with falcon's wings, which turns and shows whence the wind blows. When the sun rises in the east and its rays are reflected by the golden ball, and the brass reflects the moon-beams, she must go into the tower, which is that of her betrothed. Here she will find his old mother and must ask her for shelter, but not tell who she is.

All comes to pass as the falcon says. The old woman welcomed Militza to the tower and took pity on her plight, and lamented to her that fifteen years ago she lost her son, Jovan. Either the falcons or the Vilas must have stolen him away. Then said Militza to the old woman: "At the third hour of the night, go out from the tower and look towards the Shar mountains and Jastrebo. Thou wilt see a marvellous fire stream from the mountains to the tower, and when it reacheth the tower shalt thou see thy Jovan." The old woman did as she was bid. She saw the light. Then at midnight she took the keys and opened the room in the tower, and there she saw her son, Jovan, lying asleep in a thin shirt, with his wings and feather covering hung above his head. Then his mother stole them that he might fly away no more. And when the day dawned Militza shrieked aloud, and the old woman hurried to the room, and there she found Jovan dead with nine wounds. The Vilas had awaited him till dawn, and then, as he was faithless, they took their bows and arrows and shot him. Then the old mother cried "Kukukuka," as doth the cuckoo, and Militza shrieked like a swallow and both cried: "O Jovan, our bright sun! For a little while didst thou shine and now hast thou set behind the mountains."

Here the connection of the falcon and the sun is of very great interest. We find in the tale the very ancient belief that the sun could cause pregnancy. The maiden, like Danaë, is shut in a tower, but nevertheless the sun, in the form of a falcon, reaches her. Filipovitch, in his edition of the Kraljevitch ballads (Zagreb, 1899), states that "kavez" (a cage) was the name given to the pavilion at Byzantium in which the Royal princesses were brought up, and suggests that a similarity between the Serbian and Byzantine Courts probably existed. But the Danaë-like character of the "cage" is further shown in the ballad of *The Sister of Lek Kapetan* (Karadjitch, *Narodne Pesme*). Here, "the maiden, they say, has grown up in the cage; has grown up for fifteen years, and has never seen the sun or moon."

Hartland (*Legend of Perseus*, 1896), discussing the Danaë group of tales, says the belief in impregnation by the sun and the consequent

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seclusion of maidens was common in the Mediterranean area, and quotes an Epirote tale in which a maiden who has been promised to the sun is shut by her mother in a tower. All holes through which light could enter are carefully stopped; but she forgets the keyhole, and through it the sun sends a ray to fetch the maiden.

The "golden ball with falcon's wings" suggests the winged disc of Egypt. It is upon the tower of Jovan, the falcon-man, who flies from the mountains where the sun rises. In more lands than one the falcon is a symbol of the sun. It is, therefore, strangely interesting to find that to this day people call themselves "falcons" and "eagles" in those very parts of the Balkans where the sun and moon are commonly tattooed, painted, and embroidered.

The ballad is fragmentary. We are not told if the falcon's child is born. It suggests that at some remote period a tribe traced its origin to an ancestor thus magically begotten, and that the tale is connected with the pre-Slavonic sun-cults we have already noticed, and ultimately with Egypt. May not the Golden Apple, yet given to brides at the wedding, represent the golden ball of the sun and be an emblem of fertility?

In two versions of the ballad, *Sekula Changes Himself to a Dragon* (Karadjitch, vol. ii), we again find relationship with a falcon asserted. The tale purports to be an account of the second battle of Kosovo (1448), fought by Janos Huniades against the Turks. Knolles, writing in 1620, says: "Zekell Huniades, his sister's son, was the first of the leaders there slain in the thickest of the Turks." In the ballad this fact is clothed in myth. In Serbian, Janos Huniades is called Sibirja Yanko—that is John of Sibinj in Transylvania, of which he was voyvoda. At this time he was struggling along with the Hungarians to drive back the Turkish invasion. In the ballad he takes with him to Kosovo his sister's only son, Sekula, a mere boy, in spite of the prayers of his mother and nine sisters. The maidens in the lands they ride through vainly beg Sekula to stay with them, and foretell his death when he refuses. On Kosovo plain the warriors spread their tents, and Voyvoda Yanko said: "Up with ye, my falcons! Keep guard against the Turks while I sleep." Sekula said to Yanko: "O uncle ['ujko': mother's brother], sleep thou now awhile. I will steal to the Turkish camp and change myself to a six-winged dragon and will bring thee the mighty Sultan in my teeth. When thou risest from sleep, O uncle, do not let reason give way to madness! Shoot not the six-winged dragon. Shoot the grey falcon." Yanko slept and Sekula, in the form of a dragon, flew to the Turkish camp, returned, and duly alighted upon Yanko's tent, holding the Sultan in the form of a grey falcon in his teeth. The warriors all roared at once: "In an evil hour hast thou lain down, O



FIG. 13.—A DELI—SHOWING FEATHER ADORNMENTS  
(After Nicholas de Nikolay.)



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Voyvoda Yanko, and in a worse, arisen?" Yanko leapt to his feet and seized a golden arrow and thought at once: "Why should I shoot the grey falcon? *For I am myself a falcon, and of the race of falcons.* Better that I shoot the dragon." He shot the dragon. It hissed and loosed the falcon, which flew back to the Turkish camp. The dragon fell to the ground. Voyvoda Yanko hissed for rage and his nephew, Sekula, said to him: "O Uncle Yanko, did I not tell thee not to change reason for madness—that thou shouldst not shoot the dragon but the grey falcon?" Sekula dies of his wounds and the tale ends.

The fact that Yanko was a Vlah and claims kindred with the falcon is of much interest, for it strengthens the possibility that the falcon tale is pre-Slavonic. But a second and fragmentary version of the ballad gives a different reading. In this, when Yanko awoke and saw the dragon, he cried to George Ban Despot (Brankovitch), who was then Prince of Serbia under Turkish suzerainty, saying: "O my brother in God, George Ban Despot, dost see this marvel upon my white tent? A six-winged dragon hath seized a grey falcon. Shall I kill the dragon or the falcon?" And George Ban Despot said: "Dost thou not know, O Sibirja Yanko, that we are of the brood of falcons, and the Turks the brood of dragons? Strike the dragon; strike not the falcon." Yanko shoots three arrows, and only at the third does the dragon loose the falcon. Sekula, dying, upbraids his uncle, and asks to be buried afar in a greenwood where the Turks cannot trample on him. Here it is George Brankovitch, the Serb, who claims kindred with the falcon, and so obtains the liberation of the Sultan. But this weird ballad is based upon an historic fact. George Brankovitch, the Serb, hating Catholicism and the culture built on Rome, preferred Byzantium and the Turk. He betrayed Huniades; he prevented the arrival of the Catholic Albanian, Skenderbeg, with reinforcements, and so brought about the defeat of Huniades and firmly established the Turk in Europe. Another fragment records his pact on the subject of religion with the Sultan. The ballad is, in fact, a record of his treachery. By supporting Yanko's belief in the sacredness of the falcon he obtains the victory of the Sultan.

Eagle plumes were worn in the Balkans in the Middle Ages as a mark of heroism. Nicholas de Nikolay, French Ambassador to the Sultan, in *Quatre premiers Livres de Navigations et Pérégrinations*, 1568, gives drawings and descriptions of the types of persons he met. Among them is the "Deli" (brave madman—crazy warrior). Says Nikolay: "These are adventurers who . . . follow the Turkish army voluntarily and without payment, except that they are fed and kept at the expense of the Bashaws, who have each a large number in his suite. These fellows are inhabitants of Serbia and Bosnia. . . . The first I saw



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was at Adrianople. His coat and breeches were of the skin of a bear, with the fur outside. . . . On his head was a bonnet hanging over one shoulder, made of leopard-skin, well spotted. And to make him look the more furious he had fastened to it the great tail of an eagle, and its two wings were fastened with gilt nails to his targe, which was slung at his side. . . . I was curious as to his country and religion. He said he was of the Serbian nation, and, as to his religion, he was

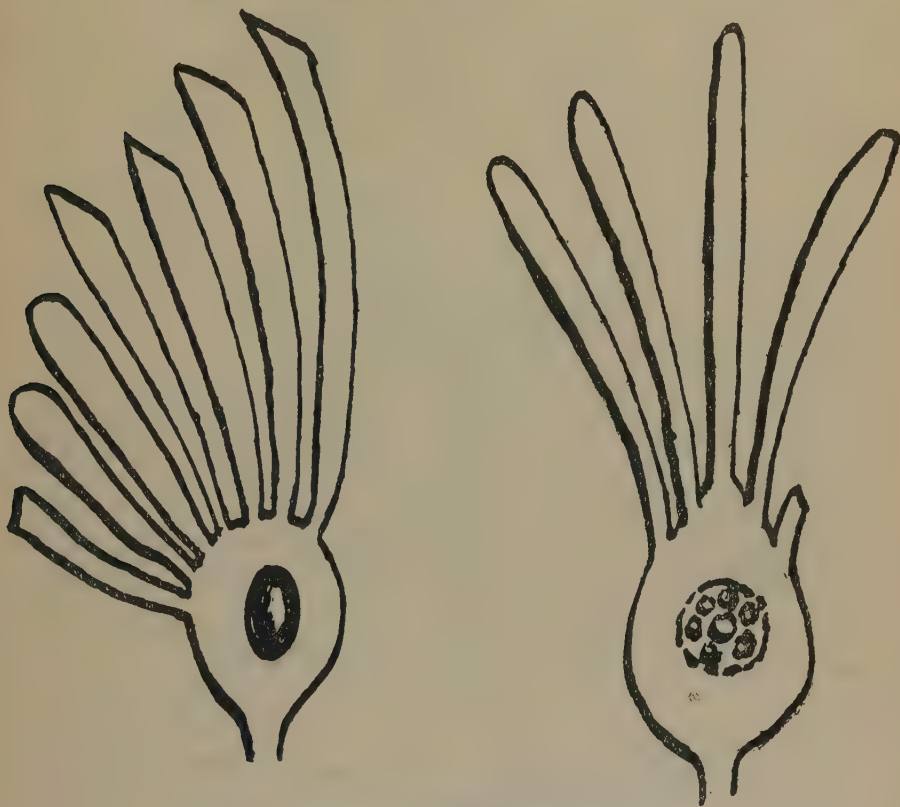


FIG. 14.—SILVER CHELENKAS IN SERAJEVO MUSEUM

living with the Turks and so dissimulated; but by birth and heart he was a Christian. . . . I asked why he went so strangely clad. He said it was to make him look more furious to his enemies. As for the *plumes*, *none might wear them but such as gave proof of valour*, for among them these plumes were thought the true ornament of a brave man of war." Thus the Serb warriors helped the Turk to maintain power. We find a similar account of costume in a ballad of Old Man Novak, the most celebrated Bosnian Hayduk of the end of the fifteenth century, whose

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cave can be seen in the Romanija mountains above Serajevo. Old Man Novak abducts the bride of a Greek in order to give her to his son, Gruitz, and goes out to fight the Greek in "terrible clothing" made of bear-skin. A wolf's head with an eagle's wing in it forms his cap, and his eyebrows are made of owl's feathers. Another famous chieftain,



FIG. 15.—MIŁOSH OBILITCH AND THE SIVI SOKO (FALCON). HEAD OF A MONTENEGRIN GUSLE

Relja of the Novibazar district (*ob. c.* 1343), sworn brother of Marko Kraljevitch, is called in the ballads and tales Relja Krilatitza, or Relja Krilati (winged Relja). Thus, in the *Sister of Lek Kapitan*: "Now shalt thou see a beauteous bridegroom—winged Relja. A winged warrior is no joke!"

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The "wingèd brother" in the Montenegrin death-wails no doubt also implies bravery. Silver plumes called "chelenka" were given as rewards of valour and worn by warriors in their caps. Some old specimens are in the Serajevo Museum. They are set with coloured stones, so look like peacock's feathers. But their shape suggests a stylized wing and tail (Fig. 14).

The bodyguard of the late rulers of Montenegro were called "Perianitzi" (plume-wearers). Till recently they were picked men who wore eagle feathers in their caps.

I possess a Montenegrin gusle carved in 1902 by a Njegushi peasant. Its head is a grotesque figure of Milosh Obilitch, who killed Sultan Murad in 1389. I was told that the bird perched on his cap is a "sivi soko" and shows that Milosh was a hero. It is, however, more like a raven than a falcon (Fig. 15).

The bronze bird chariot, one of the treasures of the Serajevo Museum, suggests that birds played a part in the prehistoric cults of the Balkans. (A very similar chariot is in the Chiusi Museum, Italy.) The Serajevo birds are rather long-necked. Are they the swans, which in the ballad of Childe Jovan come along with the falcon?

The fact that the bird tradition exists most strongly in those districts which were least under Serb rule is significant when taken with the fact that so far as I can learn the other Slavonic peoples do not call themselves falcons. I am told there is no falcon tradition in Czech literature. The now notorious "Sokol" (falcon) societies founded by two Czechs, Tyr and Fügner, in 1862, were so named by them after a visit to Montenegro, where they were struck by the fact that the Montenegrins called themselves "Sokolovi," and adopted both the name and a plume in the cap as badge of the "Sokols," whose wide-spread revolutionary work contributed largely to the destruction of the Austrian Empire.

The swans, who appear in the ballad as associate of the falcon and the Vilas, have left their mark in the popular Christian name Labud (swan).

The ravens ("gavrana") in the ballads carry news—usually bad. But the popular name Gavro derives not from them but from Gavriilo (Gabriel).

The cuckoo, as we have seen, is a bird of mourning. "Kukavitza" (cuckoo) is also a contemptuous word for "coward."

"Lastavitza" (swallow) is used in song always to describe the shrill wail of a woman or child. "She shrieked as doth the swallow." Lastavitza is a rather favourite name for a swift horse.

Soko, Sokol, Sokolitch, and Sokolovitch are all common names.

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### 5. SOME SUN AND MOON TALES

#### HOW THE SUN WAS STOLEN

This tale comes from Montenegro:—

When the wicked angels were driven out of heaven they took the sun with them. The prince of the devils stuck the sun on his spear and walked about the earth with it and it scorched and burnt up all the crops, and the people prayed God to save them. So God sent down an Archangel to steal the sun from the Devil and bring it back to its proper place. The Archangel soon met the Devil carrying the sun on his spear. But the Devil knew what the Archangel wanted, and he would not leave the sun for a moment. So the Archangel said: "Let us take a walk to the sea and bathe ourselves." When they came to the sea the Devil stuck his spear with the sun on it into the ground, and they both went into the water. After a few moments the Archangel said: "Let us see who can dive the deepest." The Archangel dived first and brought up a stone in his teeth. Then it was the Devil's turn, but he was afraid to dive lest the Archangel should fly away with the sun. So he called a magpie and told it to guard the sun and cry out. So soon as the Devil dived, the Archangel made the sign of the cross over the sea, and at once the sea was covered with very thick ice. Then he snatched the sun and began to fly to God with it as fast as he could. But the magpie screeched and the Devil heard, and came up from the bottom of the sea and banged his head on the ice and could not get out. So he dived again and fetched up a big stone, and hammered a hole in the ice and jumped out and set off after the Archangel at full speed; but the Archangel had made a good start, and the Devil did not catch him up till he was just at the gates of Heaven and had stepped with one foot over the threshold. The Devil snatched wildly at the other foot and tore a large lump out of it; but the Archangel tumbled safely in through the gate and gave the sun to God; and God was pleased, but the Archangel lamented and cried: "Look at my foot! Everyone will laugh at me." But God said: "Never mind your foot; I will order that every man shall be born with a piece torn out of his foot like this." And so it was, and everyone now has a hollow under his instep.

This tale is a strange medley. It accounts for a terrible drought, and also for the construction of the human instep; and as the sea is never frozen in the Adriatic, one suspects that this part, at any rate, must have come from farther north.

It is one of the various "Why?" tales popular in many lands, which explain the wherefore of some of the ordinary facts of life marvellously. There are many such current in the Balkans.



## *Tattooing and the Symbols Tattooed*

### THE MOON

As elsewhere, all changes of weather are believed to be dependent on the moon.

And the waxing and the waning of the moon affect all things. In Montenegro children are shown the new moon and told to jump in order that they may grow as the moon does.

In Albania crops should always be sown when the moon is waning. If sown when it is waxing they rush up quickly into a rank growth of stalks and leaves and bear no seed.

Marko's olive-trees seldom bore fruit. Nothing would induce the dear old man to manure their roots or loosen the earth. Some silly fool had planted them at the wrong phase of the moon and any work would be wasted.

Hair should always be cut at the wane of the moon; otherwise it turns white. Marko was very proud of the fact that his hair had whitened very slightly—all owing to his careful regard for the moon. When we met younger men who were quite white he used to say: "Look at the silly fellow! Cut his hair at the wrong turn of the moon!"

As elsewhere, the new moon was supposed to bring new weather. According to the doctrines of Mani, the founder of Manichæism, "the souls in which the principle of light prevailed were drawn up to the sun, the dwelling of Christ, and passed onward for ablution in the pure water which forms the moon" (Milman, *Hist. Christianity*). Mani's tenets were very widespread, and have left many a mark upon the beliefs and ritual of to-day. It seems possible that the belief that the moon was formed of pure water explains the common theory that the moon causes rain.

The comet of 1910 was looked on as a dire portent, meaning blood and disaster. It was followed by the disastrous revolutions of 1911-12, and by the wars of 1912-13 and 1914-18. In the minds of primitive people *post hoc* is always *propter hoc*. A large step in mental development has been taken when it is recognized that the two do not necessarily hang together. One case in which a portent proves true is remembered; a dozen when it does not are forgotten.

In the case of the 1910 comet the evidence is certainly overwhelming, and small wonder if folk pray such a "hylli m' bisitim" (star with a tail) may never come again.



*SECTION IV*

RELATIONSHIPS AND BLOOD CUSTOMS

1. Relationship. The Mother's Brother. Table of Relationships in Montenegro.  
Table of Relationships in North Albania.
2. Blood-brotherhood.
3. Ritual Cannibalism.
4. The Blood-feud.
5. Blood Offerings.
6. Head-hunting.
7. The Gendarme's Tale.



## SECTION IV

### RELATIONSHIPS AND BLOOD CUSTOMS

#### I. RELATIONSHIP AND THE MOTHER'S BROTHER

IN many lands an individual's paternal and maternal relatives are very differently regarded. In some primitive races, marriage with cousins on the mother's side was not merely permitted, but considered the correct thing, while marriage with paternal cousins was forbidden. Sir James Frazer, taking as text the fact that Jacob went to the Haran and married the two daughters of his mother's brother, has treated the question fully in his *Folklore of the Old Testament*.

As both the Orthodox and the Catholic Church forbid the marriage of cousins on both sides, the above custom, if it ever prevailed in the Balkans, was doubtless severely repressed. But the following facts, though they cannot be regarded as complete proof, suggest the possibility of its former existence.

That paternal and maternal relatives are regarded as belonging to different categories is proved by the fact that both in Serbian and Albanian an elaborate set of distinct terms by which to describe them is still in use.

My Montenegrin guide, Krsto, and his relatives were amazed to learn that I had but one word to describe my father's and my mother's brother; and, as I have mentioned, my Albanian guide, Marko Shantoya, was astonished when I said the daughter of his mother's sister was his cousin. Paternal blood only counted. She, therefore, was no relation of his; and he was much puzzled by my view of the matter.

As we have seen, till recently in Montenegro, and up to the present day in North Albania, the tribes have been most strictly exogamous. As they put it: "It is a great sin to marry your own blood." But "own blood" means only male blood. The child is the descendant of his father only. He merely, as it were, passes through his mother. Hence, until prohibited by the Church, there was nothing at all to prevent the marriage with maternal relatives.

In Montenegro till very recently the popes were ignorant tribesmen, with all tribal prejudices deeply ingrained. In Albania the native priests were also tribesmen, or were foreign mission priests whose reports in the eighteenth century make it clear that the marriage question was often more than they could cope with.

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As for centuries the tribes have been accustomed to marry mostly with the tribe next door (provided it had not a common male ancestor) backwards and forwards, or with a near group of tribes, it necessarily follows that these so-called exogamous tribes were closely intermarried on the female side. Among the Christians the process has been much modified in the past two or three generations, but among the Moslems, where there is no ban against maternal cousins, there has been no check on it. The Moslem tribesman will not marry his own blood on the male side; but that he has closely intermarried with it on the female side is suggested by the fact that quite marked local types had developed in Moslem districts. Even among the Christians the Maltsia e Madhe tribes usually found wives within the group and not with the Pulati group; and a different physical type prevails.

Whether a definite rule of marriage with the mother's relatives ever prevailed it is not possible to say, but of the importance of the mother's brother there is some curious evidence.

Both in Montenegro and Albania I found a strong belief that a woman's nearest and dearest is naturally her brother. Nor is this surprising. In both lands, till very recently, the marriage was made by the head of the house. The bride did not see her husband till handed over to him (*v.* section on Marriage). He was a complete stranger, and but too often her oppressor and slave-driver. Her brother was her blood relative—the one to whom in dire need she could fly for protection. One cannot live among Balkan peasants without realizing the intense value they put upon blood relationship (male blood, of course). In the old days, if her family thought her flight justified, they sheltered her. Her husband's tribe demanded her extradition, and a blood-feud which cost many lives usually followed.

In the case of my Montenegrin guide, Krsto, his wife, Iké, was entirely devoted to her one brother, Marko, whom she served with dog-like fidelity. Krsto was furious if he caught her working for Marko, for he considered her his own beast of burden. But for Marko, who lived not far off, she would run any risk. If Krsto's absence gave her half a chance, she stole away and carried water, kneaded bread, and mended for Marko, who was unmarried, and permitted her thus to slave for him, though he knew well it might cost her a beating or, at best, a storming and cursing.

There was constant friction between Marko and Krsto over this. They were distantly polite when they met, and were like two dogs which walk stiffly round each other with curled lip and eye askant. Once poor Iké confided to me that Krsto would be away for two days, so Marko was going to cut his hay in order that she might carry it for him then. She had to tell me lest I should inadvertently let it out to

## *Relationships and Blood Customs*

Krsto. So for two days she staggered back and forth, bent double under small hay-stacks, which big, strong Marko could have easily carried for himself, and came home exhausted, saying: "Marko is my only brother. I could not let him degrade himself by carrying hay, and he has no wife. But in God's name do not tell Krsto."

Poor Iké looked on my stay in the hut as a reign of peace, and used to call me "my golden sister" or "my shining sun"; for Krsto was considerably in awe of me. Sometimes her fatigue betrayed her, and he fiercely accused her of working for Marko, which she as strenuously denied. But he dared not beat her when I was there, and Iké continued to say to me in private: "A woman's brother comes before all."

The following ballad, taken from *Velika Srpska Narodna Lira*, and apparently taken from oral tradition, as no author is given, illustrates this belief.

"The sister begged the brother to sup with her: 'Come, O my brother, and sup with me!' 'I cannot sup with thee, O my sister. Last night was I in the wine-shop—and I fell a-quarrelling with some Turks. I slew one—a mother's only son. Neither gold nor silver will the Sultan accept [i.e. as blood-gelt]. He demands head for head—either my head or one of my kin. None have I that can take my place. So to-morrow I shall die.' And again spoke the sister to the brother: 'Four grown sons hath thy sister. One will I give to the Sultan in place of thy head, O brother!'

"When day dawned next morning the mother lamented as doth the cuckoo. She mourned over her son Radovan: 'Shall I give up Radovan? Radovan was my first delight.' And she mourned over her son Milovan: 'Milovan is my second darling!' And she mourned over her son Yovan: 'Shall I give up my Yovan? Yovan, who taught me to read?' Then she mourned over her son Simeun: 'Shall I give up my son Simeun? Simeun is his mother's last born!'

"Then she awoke young Simeun: 'Arise, O Simeun, the sun is shining. Thine uncle ["ujko," mother's brother] summons thee to his wedding to be bride-leader to the maiden.'

" 'Oh, leave me alone, dear mother. Last night I dreamed a wondrous dream. I saw my uncle with arms bloody to the elbow.'

" 'Arise, Simeun, dear son! Do not make thine uncle await thee on the plain.'

"Then he clad himself in silk and velvet and straightway rode to the wide plain. And three young Turks met him. The first cried: 'A gallant warrior.' And the second said: 'Gallant, indeed. Why should his mother weep for him?'

"The third said never a word, but he swung his sword and smote off Simeun's head.



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"Then the dead head spoke to the Turks: 'O my brothers in God, ye three young Turks—put me in my horse's nosebag. Let him carry me to my dear mother. Let her weep and sing the death-chants. Let her give no more sons to be bride-leader—bride-leader to a treacherous uncle.' "

The tale ends thus abruptly with no comment on the conduct of mother or uncle.

Another instance of the importance of the mother's brother is seen in the Serbian ballad, *Sekula Changes Himself to a Serpent* (v. chapter on Bird Tradition). Here the mother, against her will, has to allow her only son, though very young, to go with her brother (his *ujko*) to the second battle of Kosovo. He is killed there and his uncle escapes. Though not expressly stated in the ballad, it is possible that here, too, we have a reminiscence of the idea of giving a son to save a brother.

The grimmest and most dramatic tale of the mother's brother is in Albanian and comes from the Mirdite mountains. It is said to be true and "very old." A Mirdite woman was given in marriage to a Christian Scutarene. Her brother was a daring outlaw who harried the Turks, and they set a price upon his head. So daring was he that he would come by night to the town to visit his sister. Her husband, sorely tempted by the promised reward, betrayed his brother-in-law to the Turkish officials. One night, when he had entered and, as is customary, given up his weapons, the Turkish guards rushed in and killed him.

His sister mourned bitterly, but did not suspect her husband's treachery till the night when she found him counting a bag of gold. Then the truth flashed upon her. She charged her husband with her brother's death, and he could not deny it. Frightened, he tried to calm her terrible wrath. Sooner or later, said he, her brother was sure to be caught, if so foolhardy as to visit the town. Someone would have had the reward. "Why not we, as we are so poor?" He spoke of all they could buy with the money, and she spoke no word. He thought he had convinced her, and lay on his bed and slept. But for the Mirdite woman there was no sleep. She sat far into the night, and ever her brother's blood cried to her; and at midnight she rose and took her brother's "handzhar"—the heavy sword he had so often wielded well. She stood over her sleeping husband, swung up the sword, and in her brother's name struck off her husband's head. Then she stood by her two young sons, and here she wavered. But the call of her brother and her tribe was stronger than mother-love. "Seed of a serpent," she cried, "ye shall never live to betray my people." And them, too, she slew, and with the bloody handzhar in her hands fled from the town to the Mirdite mountains, where she was hailed as a hero; for she had avenged her brother and cleaned the honour of the tribe.



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I shall never forget the thrill with which I heard this tale told me by Bab i Tash on the deck of an Adriatic steamer at midnight, when the stars glowed and the sea was phosphorescent. "It is the greatest tale in all the world," he said—"even the old Greek tragedies do not surpass it."

It is to the old Greek tragedies that we must go, in fact, to find a parallel to poor Iké and her devotion to Marko; to the woman who sacrificed her son, Simeun, to her brother; and to the Mirdite woman.

We find it in Antigone's cry as she is led away to be buried alive for the sin of burying the body of her outlawed brother:—

Thou dearest brother; I with these my hands  
Washed each dear corpse, arrayed you, poured the stream,  
In rites of burial. And in care for thee,  
Thy body Polynices honouring,  
I gain this recompense! And yet 'twas well;  
I had not done it had I come to be  
A mother with her children—had not dared,  
Though 'twere a husband's body mouldered there,  
Against my country's will to bear this toll.  
And dost thou ask what law constrained me thus?  
I answer, *had I lost a husband dear,*  
*I might have had another; other sons*  
*By other spouse, if one were lost to me.*  
*But when my father and my mother sleep*  
*In Hades, then no brother more can come.*

(Sophocles, *Plumtre's translation.*)

Rather over two thousand years later poor Iké, in less tragic circumstances, uttered the same cry. I am told that commentators, shocked by the sentiments expressed, have tried to cast doubt on the genuineness of this passage—stay-at-home fogies who did not know the Balkans. They do not realize that in England we still say: "Blood is thicker than water." In the Balkans they say it, and mean it, too. The husband is not of the wife's blood. Her duty is to her own blood—her brother.

### TABLE OF RELATIONSHIPS AS IN MONTENEGRO

Father—Otat.

Mother—Majka.

Grandfather (father's father)—Djed.

Great uncle—also Djed. Krsto puzzled me by saying his Djed had died childless. When I asked how he himself had originated he said: "From my other Djed, his brother."

Grandmother—Baba (father's mother).

Great-grandmother—Prababa.

Uncle (father's brother)—Stritz.

His wife—Strina.

Uncle (mother's brother)—Ujko or Ujak or Daitza.

His wife—Ujna.

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Brother—Brat. Applied to all cousins within the bratstvo in ordinary conversation. "Born brother" or "brother by my mother" added to explain real brother.

Sister—Sestra.

A woman's husband's brother is her Djever.

A woman's husband's sister is her Zaova.

A woman's sister is her husband's Svast.

A woman's brother is her husband's Shura. The Shura's wife is Shurnjaja. The wives of two or more brothers are each other's Jetrva.

A woman's father is her husband's Tast.

A man's father is his wife's Svekar.

A man's mother is his wife's Svekrva.

A woman's mother is her husband's Punitza.

Nephew (brother's child) is Bratanatz or Sinovatz, or Bratuched.

Nephew (sister's child) is Sestritch.

A man's sister's husband is his Svak.

A man's brother's wife is his Snaha.

A daughter of the house married into another tribe is called Odiva.

A cousin on the father's side to almost any degree, Rodjak or Bratsvenik.

When first plunged into a peasant family one finds these numerous names most complicated.

### RELATIONSHIPS IN NORTH ALBANIA

#### *Mother's Side.*

Mother—Am. But familiarly and commonly Nané.

Uncle (mother's brother)—Daje, or Vla i Nanes.

Aunt (mother's sister)—Dajeshe, or Tezé.

Daughter—E bija. Often Vaiza eme (my maiden).

Sister—Moter.

Wife—Shoké (lit., companion). Sometimes Fat, my fate.

Bride or fiancée or newly married woman—Nusé.

Mother-in-law—Vjehera.

The in-law family collectively—Vjeherii.

Daughter-in-law—Ree.

Godmother—Nriku, or Nuné.

Cousin on mother's side. This seemed hardly to be considered a relation. Marko denied that his mother's sister's daughter was his "cousin," but said if she had been his father's sister's child she would have been his Kushrina. The dictionaries give "kushrina" without mentioning on which side the family. There seems to be no special word for "cousin" on female side.

Female head of the household—E zoja shpis.

#### *Father's Side.*

Father—Bab. (This is the word commonly used. When speaking of the father of the family, Ati fmjevet would be used. Ati is used when speaking of God the Father, e.g. Ati i pustueshem, the Eternal Father.)

Grandfather (father's father)—Gyushi.

Great-grandfather—Katragniushi.

Brother—Vlla.

Brethren collectively—Vllaznii.

## *Relationships and Blood Customs*

Uncle (father's brother)—Adzh: this is a Turkish word, but is in common use. There is another word, which is Albanian: "Mighe," also "unghe," but "adzh" is commonly used.

Aunt (father's sister)—Hallé.

Nephew (brother's or sister's son)—Nipi, collectively Nipnii.

Niece (brother's or sister's daughter)—Mesé.

Son—I biri.

Brother-in-law—Konati.

Son-in-law—Dhaner. Also used for bridegroom and fiancé.

Sister-in-law—Kunata.

Cousin—Kushrin.

Female cousin—Kushrina.

Husband—Shok, i.e. companion; or Bur, i.e. man.

Father-in-law—Vjeher.

Godfather, sponsor—Kumar. Godfather of baptism—Kumar i pakzimit.

Godfather of haircutting—Kumar i floksh.

Tribe—Fis.

Relations collectively—Dzinije.

Vlaznija, lit. brethren. A large family group within the tribe like the Montenegrin bratstvo.

Mehala—a Turkish word used for a group of related houses, i.e. a Vlaznija.

Shpi—House and house community.

Krue—Head of a Vlaznija or Mehala.

Plak—Old man. Hence an elder—member, that is, of a tribal council.

Zoti i shpis—Lord of the house.

Bairaktar—Standard-bearer. Head of Fis (Turkish word).

### 2. BLOOD-BROTHERHOOD

"But the flesh with the life thereof which is the blood thereof shall ye not eat" (Gen. ix. 4).

"For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof" (Lev. xvii. 14).

He who ate the blood would take within him the life of the beast—would become, in fact, partly beast. It follows naturally that he who eats the blood of man establishes kinship with him whose life he thus shares. Blood-brotherhood is a very old and widespread custom. "Whenever the Scythians," says Herodotus (Bk. IV, lxx), "form alliances a large earthen vessel is filled with wine; into this is poured some of the blood of the contracting parties . . . in this cup they dip some arrows, a hatchet, and a spear. After some solemn praying the parties who form the contract . . . finally drink the contents of the bowl."

From the lands lying north-east of the Balkans came down neighbours of the Scythians, the Pechinegs and the Comans, and the Bulgars. The Comans, says B. H. Minns (*v. Scythians and Greeks*), were a

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Mongol people. Both Pechinegs and Comans, we hear in contemporary accounts of the Crusades, were used as soldiery by the Balkan princes.

A vivid account of Balkan armies in the Middle Ages is given by Nicephor Gregory and by Villehardouin (*v. Dufresne Ducange, History of Constantinople*, 1729), telling of the Latin capture of Constantinople when Count Baldwin of Flanders and the other princes established a Latin empire there, though on their way to a crusade in Palestine.

In 1204 Baldwin was crowned Emperor of Byzantium in St. Sofia with great magnificence, and was about to lead an army eastward when, "on a sudden, like the crash of a great thunderstorm, the terror of a Bulgarian rising stayed them. John, the brother of the first Asan and his successor, with troops levied through all Bulgaria, and not a few of the Scythians who dwell north of the Ister (Danube), fell upon Thrace with violence and greatly endangered the Latin State." Baldwin fought the Bulgars, with terrible slaughter on both sides. But the heavily armoured Crusaders could not cope with the swift Scythians; "some forty thousand Comans, who are a pagan people," ambushed them and overwhelmed them with lances and arrows. The ground was covered with corpses. Many Latins were taken prisoner, among them Baldwin himself, who was never seen again. "And the Scythians, in their fashion, laid waste Macedonia."

The whole of Villehardouin's account of the Fourth Crusade in the Balkans is of high interest for the light it throws on the conditions then prevailing. We see the Balkans reinforced by hordes from the north-east. Russia has always pressed Balkan-ward, and will again. The Turk had not yet arrived on the scene, but the Balkan already was the East, with aims and aspirations different from those of the West—a thing apart from West Europe, with its civilization built upon Rome. The Fourth Crusade was but one of the many vain attempts of the West to establish a permanent footing in the East.

Vain it was. Baldwin II, the last Latin emperor, poverty-stricken, was reduced to obtaining funds by selling the much-treasured relic, the Crown of Thorns, to the King of France, and buying the support of those very Comans who had formerly broken the Latin forces. He did this by swearing an alliance "with these barbarous people. In order to make the treaty more solemn they drew blood from their veins—one giving it to be drunk by the other, believing that from this mixture of blood they contracted a kind of brotherhood . . . which our people, driven by the necessity in which they found themselves, had also to do." Thus in 1240 did the knights of France swear blood-brotherhood with pagans—a grotesque result of a Crusade which was to free the East of Unbelievers. A French noble, Nariot de Toucy, further cemented the bond by marrying the daughter of Jonas, Prince of the Comans. Vain



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efforts. Jonas died in 1241 and was buried outside Constantinople with full Scythian honours. A huge mound was raised above him, on the sides of which twenty-five of his serving-men, who voluntarily offered themselves, were hanged. Twenty-five horses were also hanged, and the prince thus provided with a mounted escort in another world. Not long afterwards the East expelled the West, and the Comans took part in the expulsion. The markedly Mongol types still common in Macedonia and Bulgaria are partly, maybe, the legacy of the "Coman and Scythian from beyond the Danube."

The custom of blood-brotherhood is so widely spread through the world that it was probably practised by other Balkan peoples besides the Comans.

It was very common among the North Albanian tribesmen, both Catholic and Moslem, when I was in the mountains. The Catholic Church regarded it as a pagan survival, and has made no effort to "Christianize" it, as has the Orthodox. The usage of ancient days is, therefore, little changed. In its crudest form the arm, or finger, of each was pricked by a thorn, and either party licked the other's blood. The favourite and more elaborate way was described to me by my old friend, Tony Precha, of Mirdite descent, thus: "I travelled through a dangerous district with a young Moslem when I was a lad. He asked me to be his brother. I had to ask permission of my father, the head of the house. He said theirs was a good house to be allied to. When some time had passed and we still wished for brotherhood, we met, and each tied a tight string round his little finger till it swelled, then pricked the finger, and each let his blood drop on a lump of sugar. I ate his lump and he mine. We were then of the same blood and swore brotherhood. Then I dined at his house, and we gave each other presents of socks knitted in beautiful patterns. He is now dead, but his brothers are my brothers and our children are cousins, and they cannot marry for more than a hundred years."

The interdict against marriage, however, in a case of sworn brotherhood, applied only to the direct descendants of the couple and not to any collaterals.

Sugar was used in this case because one party was Moslem. In the case of Christians the blood is always taken in raki or in wine. Red wine, doubtless because most resembling blood, is the correct medium.

Blood-brotherhood was, of course, not reckoned a "forbidden degree" by the Church, but in practice was strictly observed by the people.

The swearing of blood-brotherhood between some members of either side was one of the ways of making peace after a blood-feud. In Dushmani I met a high-spirited youth who had laid in wait on the

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banks of the Drin to shoot another lad with whose family he was in blood, and who was due to cross the river on the usual inflated sheepskins. Drin ran swiftly, the sheep-skin float broke loose. Soon the foe was struggling for life in the torrent. The blood-seeker threw aside his rifle, dashed into the torrent and saved his foe at the risk of his own life. They then and there swore brotherhood and the feud ceased. This episode goes to prove that blood-taking is not vengeance. The drowning of the foe would have in no way settled the feud, for expiatory blood would not have been taken.

The old bairaktar of Nikaj heard that I was sister to the King of England and believed a blood alliance with me would be for the good of the tribe. The priest at whose house I was, however, laughed at him uproariously and he was hurt; so I never took part in the ritual.

In Albanian this brotherhood is called "Vllam" or "Vlaa me Tenzone" (brother in God). It is also very commonly called "probotin" or "probo," an obvious corruption of the Serb "pobratim." "Birazel" (? Turkish) was, I was told, used also by the Moslems.

The custom extends all over Albania, but of the South I have no details.

### SERBS AND MONTENEGRINS

In Montenegro I was often assured that the custom was extinct, and I never came across a case. But it possibly still lingered in out-of-the-way places. People who wished to appear "civilized" in Montenegro were very apt to deny the existence of customs they thought would be despised. But it was admitted that "pobratimstvo" had but recently died out. Medakovitch in 1860 mentions it as prevalent.

The Orthodox Church, both in Serbia and Montenegro, adopted this pagan custom and tried to "Christianize" it.

Two forms of pobratimstvo were known:—

1. "Probratimstvoprchestno" (communion pobratimstvo). "Prichest" is the word for the Holy Communion. It was not, however, a case of the two parties taking the Communion together, but a special ceremony. In the Orthodox Church, when the people receive the Communion, the Host is put into the consecrated wine. The pope takes a portion of the soaked bread in a special spoon and gives it to the communicant. The ritual for pobratimstvo, so far as I could learn, was as follows: The two parties went together to church. The pope read a prayer. The two then took a large goblet full of wine, and both, setting their lips to it, sipped at once. They then broke bread and each ate a piece. They sipped and ate together thus three times and then kissed the cross, the Gospels, and the ikon, and lastly each other. It is a curious

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example of a pagan rite transformed into a parody of the Communion. The bread and wine are apparently substitutes for the blood (? and flesh) of the contracting parties. In early days probably blood was added to the wine-cup.

My old friend, Pope Gjuro of Njegushi, spoke in the strongest terms against this ceremony, which he said the Church should never have permitted. He described it as "the marriage of two men and against all nature," and intimated clearly, as did others, that it had been used as the cloak for vice.

The second form of *probratimstvo* was known as "*Pobratimstvo nevolje*" (brotherhood of misfortune). If a man or woman in dire need called on another for help in the name of God and St. John, the person so called was bound to give help as to his own brother. St. John, as he baptized Christ, is the godfather and patron saint of godfathers. The godchildren of one godfather rank as born brethren. Therefore St. John is called on to confer the relationship which entitles the sufferer to help.

We find many instances in the national ballads. When Tsar Stefan expels his daughter from home for unchastity, she wanders on the mountains and cries for help to the shepherd, Vidé: "O my brother in God, Vidé the shepherd!" And Vidé accepted brotherhood in God with her and spake thus to his "*posestrima*" . . . and guided her on her way.

Such "brotherhood in misfortune" could be ratified later by a full ceremony.

I heard of a curious case in Bosnia. The mother of my Serb teacher in Serajevo used to buy eggs of a market-woman. One day this woman appeared much excited at the lady's house. In the night she had had a terrible dream. A huge dragon had attacked her. The lady had appeared and the woman, in desperate need, had called on her as sister in God for help. Thus addressed, the lady at once drove the dragon away. The grateful woman now came to beg ratification of the vow thus made in a dream. Sisterhood was accordingly sworn. The market-woman often visited her "*posestrima*," and called her always "sister."

The origin of such artificial relationships is clear. In the mentality of early days friendship, as we know it, did not exist. The family group—the *bratstvo*—was the unit. Then came the tribe. These were all of one blood. Outside the tribe was the rest of the world—potential enemies—relations with whom could only be established by means of a simulated kinship. An exchange of blood—for the blood is the life—was the obvious way to do this. The national ballads of the Serbs and Montenegrins give ample proof of this. The Serb local chieftains we find all bound to one another by *pobratimstvo*, and in Montenegro the heads of *bratstvos* and *plemena* are thus united. Not being



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otherwise related, artificial consanguinity had to be created to help keep the peace.

In the fourteenth-century tales the notorious Kralyevitch Marko is pobratim to Wingèd Relja, lord of Novibazar, to Milosh Obilitch, lord of Pochera, and to Milan, lord of Toplitza. Marko is also pobratim to a Vila.

The King, so far as I can find, was never pobratim to anyone. In the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ballads of the Uscochi and Hayduks the pobratim is always the head of another district or clan, or someone called upon "u nevolji" (in misfortune).

As an example of headmen, we find Ivan of Segna, the most notorious of the seventeenth century Uscochi, receives a letter from Pantza of Udbinje, a Turkish stronghold, saying: "Listen to me, Ivan of Segna! Meet me where the coast curves and let us make peace and pobratimstvo. Enough have we fought on our frontiers, warriors enough have died. Let us make peace."

When a blood-feud was laid it was customary, as we have seen, that members of the contending parties should seal the peace by swearing pobratimstvo.

But the fact that blood-feuds continued to rage indicates that the oath was not always kept. When between Moslem and Christian, the Christian ballad blames the Moslem and the Moslem sings of Christian treachery.

The much-sung Hayduk chiefs of the Bocche and Dalmatia were all sworn brethren. Serdar Ilija Smilianitch was pobratim to Stojan Jankovitch, who in 1669 was in Venetian employ as Serdar of the Morlachs.

This same Ilija, too, was pobratim to the famous Vuk Mandusitch—his uncle on his mother's side ("daitza"). Female blood in the Balkans does not give blood-relationship. Therefore he is not of the same blood as his daitza, so swears pobratimstvo with him.

Many ballads tell of the duty of the pobratima to take blood for one another. Thus: three Hayduks, sworn brethren, drink wine under a fir-tree; Radé of Sokol, Sava of Posavlja, and Pavle of the Syrmian plain. Winter draws nigh. You cannot go a-briganding when snow blocks the passes. They must find winter quarters and await the spring, when the robber season reopens on fair St. George's Day. The two latter go to their homes, but Radé seeks shelter at the house of his Moslem pobratim, Ashim Beg. Ashim receives him in the name of brotherhood. But when Radé is asleep Ashim's wife points out that it will be great expense to keep the Hayduk through the winter, and that he has booty on him; they therefore murder him. In the spring, as Radé does not come to the trysting-place, his two pobratims go in



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search of him. They beat the Beg's wife with a three-tailed scourge till she confesses, and then drag the Beg into the yard and hack him to pieces, and so avenge Radé.

In the nineteenth century, in the *Junatchki Spomenik*, by Grand Voyvoda Mirko, telling of the Montenegrins' fights with the Turks up to 1862, we find plenty of pobratims. Thus Serdar Schepan of Rudina, Serdar Gjoko of Banjani, and Voyvoda Ilija of Lukovo are pobratims. They are the headmen of tribes ("plemena") and therefore not blood relations, so must have recourse to an artificial kinship. But we will not crowd our pages with more such examples.

Of pobratimstvo in misfortune the ballads give many examples. A stock ballad episode is the capture and imprisonment of the hero. He then cries from the prison window to some passer-by: "In God's name, thou my brother (or sister), help me." Often the appeal is to "Suljo, the gipsy," or to a gipsy who "hearkens because he was called on in God's name."

Sometimes the hero is saved by his "posestrima in misfortune." Thus in *Gruitz's Faithless Wife*, Gruitz, when taken prisoner by three Turks, is saved by his posestrima Mara, the woman who keeps the inn. Hearing of his plight from the three Turks, who boast to her of having caught him, she cries: "Woe is me for thee, Gruitz, my brother in God! Three times hast thou helped me in misfortune. Three times saved me from slavery! And into what slavery hast thou now fallen thyself!"

She thereupon serves the Turks with mead, which she drugs with a certain herb, and while they sleep Gruitz cuts them each in half and escapes.

The Abbé Alberto Fortis, in his *Travels into Dalmatia*, 1778, speaks of pobratimstvo as common then among the Morlachs. He says: "They have even made it a kind of religious point and tie the sacred bond at the foot of the altar. The Slavonian ritual contains a particular benediction for the solemn union of two male or two female friends. . . . I was present at the union of two young women who were made posestre in the Church of Perussich."

Fortis does not mention exchange of blood. But as this is still practised in Balkan lands we cannot doubt that it was the original form.

### 3. RITUAL CANNIBALISM

That belief in union by blood existed in the seventeenth century is indicated in the curiously vivid contemporary account given in *Historia degli Uscochi*, by Minucio Minucci, Archbishop of Zara (Venice, 1603, *et seq.*).

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An Uskok (from "uskochiti," to leap out) is literally one who has fled or emigrated. The notorious Uscochi of Segna were originally refugees from the Turkish provinces who were later reinforced by all kinds of criminals flying from justice. Segna was strongly placed in a deep bay, sheltered by the island of Veglia; the land side inaccessible to a large army because of forest and mountain.

Here they lived as brigands and pirates (partly perforce, for the land could not support a large population), ravaged and terrorized the coast lands, captured rich galleys, raided the Turkish borders, abducted women, and burnt and plundered the neighbouring villages. Segna then was owned by Count Frangipani as feudatory to the Crown of Hungary. The Venetians, unable to cope with the situation, insisted that the Emperor should make order there. A certain Rabatto was, therefore, sent as Commissary to arrest a notorious pirate, Giurissa. His arrest infuriated the populace, and the account continues: "Inflamed by brandy, they tried to force the gate of the castle and brought up guns. The Commissary, knowing that the bestiality of the people would not end till they had achieved their aim, freed Giurissa. But their rage did not cease. They massacred the small German guard, threw down the doors, and reached the room of the Commissary, and felled him to the ground, though he tried to defend himself with sword and pistol. The Barbarians cut off his head and put it in a public place as spectacle for the multitude. The corpse was placed in the church, and the women, to show themselves not less impious than their husbands, after many curses *licked with their tongues the blood that came from the wounds*. Such was the end of a valorous and good cavalier."

In 1613 the Venetians attacked the Uscochi at sea and captured some of their ships. The infuriated Uscochi fell upon a Venetian galley in port at Pago whose captain, Cristoforo Veniero, was unaware of the Venetian victory and was taken completely by surprise by the Uscochi, who seized his vessel. "It was piteous how, in cold blood, forty innocent persons were barbarously killed. They threw the bodies into the sea and turned the galley towards the straits of Segna. On the way they cut off the head of Lucretio Gravisio, a knight and gentleman of Capo d'Istria, and of his brother and his nephew, who were passengers, and robbed and stripped the wife of this knight and her women. They kept only Veniero alive of the men, and went to Morlaca, a little below Segna. Having landed there, they made him land, too, and cut off his head. They stripped his body and threw it into the sea, and, having made ready a meal, they put the head of the unfortunate man on the table, where it stood while they ate. All of which things were seen by the women and by the galley-men who remained on the vessel. Some asserted that they ate his heart. Others that they dipped their bread

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in his blood by reason of a certain superstition that the eating together of the blood of an enemy was a mystery ('arcano'), and a strict obligation not to desert each other but to suffer the same fortunes."

That similar ideas prevailed as late as 1915 is shown in an account given by Miss F. Wilson, who, when in charge of Serbian refugees, took down an account of the means by which the Serbians worked to obtain the Bulgarian portions of Macedonia, given her by a Serbian schoolmaster. "We got the children," he said, "and made them realize that they were Serbs." When their Bulgarian parents resisted and took up arms against Serb propagandists, a gang of thirty Serbs "met in a darkened room, and swore for each Serb killed to kill two Bulgars. Lots were drawn for who should go forth to assassinate. We broke a loaf in two and each ate a piece. *Our wine was the blood of the Bulgars.*"

The barbaric ceremony is in meaning the same as that reported by Minucci. The Serbian schoolmaster of the twentieth century showed the same savage ferocity as the pirate of the seventeenth.

That in the seventeenth century reports of such practices were current is shown by Shakespeare, a contemporary of the Uscochi, who makes Beatrice, when enraged with Claudio, cry: "O God that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place."

The above instances come under the heading rather of ritual cannibalism than of brotherhood; though the two are not very far apart, since the underlying reason of cannibalism is believed to be not merely the destruction of the man's personality, but in order to acquire his valour and spirit—to become in a way one with him.

The ferocity of the Uscochi is fully borne out by their own ballads, which glorify the raids and robbery denounced by the Archbishop. It all depends on the point of view. A certain Giovanni, mentioned as one of the most savage by the Venetian chronicler, is without doubt the much-praised hero Ivan of Segna of the songs, whom we have already mentioned. His admirers show him to be almost as ferocious as do his denouncers.

A ballad (*Shta Osveta Chini*), in vol. iii of the Karadjitch collection, shows the Archbishop's account of such Hayduks to have been truthful. "Tasha Nikolitch . . . wrote a letter and sent it to Bayo Pivljanin" (v. Piva tribe), "saying: 'O my pobratim, Bayo Pivljanin, unfurl me thy silken standard. Smear the knob of its staff with blood. Gather under thy standard all who have taken blood; men without father or mother who know naught of a true love; men whose cloak to each is his house, whose sword and gun are his father and mother, and his two pistols are his two born brethren, and who can fend for himself across the border with his sword as doth a falcon with its wings in the



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clouds." Bajo bloodied the knob of his standard and gathered thirty men, and they took a most revolting vengeance. The putting blood upon the knob of the banner is noteworthy.

That the practice of drinking the enemies' blood formerly existed is suggested by the phrase "Popiti kome krv," which means "to kill someone," but is literally, "To drink up someone's blood"; and by the term "veliki krvopija," a great blood-drinker, which I have often heard used to describe a fighting-man.

Our own word "bloodthirsty" is, maybe, reminiscent of the Northmen, who drank their foes' blood from skulls.

The belief in the power of blood is further shown in the Balkans. The law, "But the flesh with the blood thereof you shall not eat," is still in force. Beasts slaughtered for food have their throats cut. Fowls are beheaded and hung up to drain. Otherwise, I was always told, the meat would be unfit to eat. This is proved by the fact that you cannot tell the future correctly from the bone of either sheep or fowl unless it has been thus killed, for the blood all goes wrong and spoils it.

The very great rôle played by the mystic power of blood in the lives of the people is shown by some of their practices, which we will now consider.

### 4. THE BLOOD-FEUD

As we have seen, the object of most of the laws we have quoted is to stop a blood-feud or to prevent one arising. The blood-feud was a central fact in the life of the people.

The mysterious power of blood is seen in the custom of blood-brotherhood and in the blood-feud. The blood-feud is misunderstood when it is spoken of as "vengeance" and regarded only as punishment for a crime. It has almost a religious quality; it is an offering to the soul of the dead man. The custom was almost stamped out when I was in Montenegro. It was still in full force when I was in the Albanian mountains, and recent enough in Montenegro for there to be a mass of tales about it. In both lands it was borne in upon me that in the minds of the people there was a vast difference between killing a man as a result of a quarrel, or when robbing him, and "taking blood." The first is murder; the second is a duty, painful, dangerous, fatal perhaps—but a duty that must be done. In Serbian the same word "osvetiti," or "svetiti," means to hallow or consecrate, and also to take blood in a feud. "Osvetnik" is the blood-taker, "osveta" the act of taking blood (commonly translated vengeance). The taking of blood is shown thus to have been originally a holy rite.

Writing in 1860, Medakovitch says: "Osveta is something born in



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a man. The Montenegrin would rather die than live shamefully. . . . The Osvetnik tracks the 'krvnik' (man who has taken blood), seeks on all sides, falls on him in a convenient spot or defile. He cannot work, cannot sleep; peace and rest he knows not till he has fulfilled his evil and bloody task. . . . In truth he must take blood ('svetiti se'), otherwise he has no place and no honour among the Montenegrins. When he has done it he rejoices. It seems to him that he is born again, and he is proud as if he had won a hundred fights."

Men feared to die by an unknown hand lest no blood should be taken for them. Vrchevitch, giving the evidence of a peasant whose house was attacked by robbers in the Bocche di Cattaro, says: "I was afraid (my house is lonely and far from my relatives) that my slayer ('krvnik') would be unknown and I should die unavenged." Similarly, in a Scottish ballad we find:—

It grieves my heart I must depart  
And not avengèd be.

In Albania I found it believed that the soul of the slain man never rests till blood has been taken for it.

To take blood is the hideous duty of the relatives. To fulfil this duty a man risks his whole future and that of his family. I realized this when I met for the first time, in Lower Kastrati, two "gjaksors" who had just taken blood. One was a youth from Shkreli—only fifteen, his first act on reaching manhood. He had fled into Kastrati for shelter. His hosts were deeply sorry for him. He was a tall dark lad and looked a mere boy. Silent and dazed, he seemed overwhelmed by his fate. We got him to speak a little. He had been to school in Scutari, and could read and write. Had had hopes for the future; now he could never go back there and was an outcast, dependent on charity for his bread, and dogged by those who would take his blood in return, if they could. But why had he killed this man? He must; he had no choice; he was obliged to by "our law." His hosts said that the Turkish authorities had ordered that the house of his family should be burnt—for he had not one of his own. But as Shkreli was at feud with the Turkish authorities the order would not be obeyed.

The second guest was a sad and weary man about forty. He, too, had taken blood because he "was obliged to." Our hosts, too, were "in blood," and only the women could go out and about business. Wherever I went folk deplored to me that the law should be such. I was often asked to beg the King of England to make new laws and government for them. I vainly told them they should change the law themselves; but no one could begin unless everyone else did. Nor need one despise them for this, for to-day the so-called civilized Powers

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are, for the same reason, unable to put aside wholesale blood-taking because none will begin disarming.

The man who had taken blood—and I met many—in spite of exile, house-burning, and danger, was borne up always by the thought that he had done his duty and cleaned his honour. Cost what it might, his “face was not black.”

Some exulted in it. Everywhere the Franciscans and priests did their best to convince their flocks it was wrong. In Seltzi, Padre Giacomo, a man of very remarkable individuality, had great influence, and cases were rare. All through Maltsia e Madhe it was generally agreed that only the guilty man should be shot and not his relatives. All the other mountains held the old belief—that male blood of the “house,” failing that, of the “mehala,” or even of the tribe, was equally efficacious when it concerned another tribe. If the blood was within the tribe, then any male blood of the “house.”

It must be male blood, because of the general belief that no blood is inherited from the mother. Travellers of old spread a fine fairy-tale about the Montenegrins, who were said to be so chivalrous that a woman could go about in safety at any hour. Chivalry had nothing to do with it, and the Montenegrin did not even know what it meant. Women were safe because their blood was useless as expiation, and to kill one started a new “blood” and made matters worse.

Women in most lands cling more tightly to old beliefs and practices than do the men, partly owing to the fact that they have had less opportunity of contact with the outer world and new ideas. Looked on thus, it is not so surprising to find that women were fierce upholders of the blood-feud. A widow left with a young son has often and often brought up the boy with the sole idea of taking blood for his father. Even when the other men of the family have made peace and accepted blood-gelt a feud has been reopened by a boy of fifteen, who so soon as he has reached manhood, according to the ideas of the land, has been sent out by his mother on the deadly errand. She knows that she may lose her son; that the house may be burnt over her head, and she left lonely and destitute. But the soul of her dead husband has cried to her night after night. Blood-gelt gives it no peace. Blood alone can do that, and her son must go out to slay or be slain for his father's sake. For this she has kept in a bottle a blood-soaked piece of his garment, and again and again shown it him. It is a treasure hidden in her dower-chest; and a day comes, so all declare, when the dry blood becomes moist and forms bubbles—“pervlon gjak,” the blood boils. The soul of the dead man can no longer wait; blood must be taken.

Nothing stops the man who has gone forth on this holy mission. The Franciscan tells him that he will burn eternally in Hell if he does

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this thing. He replies that he would rather be in Hell with his honour clean than in Heaven with it black.

The thing is as inevitable as is the blood-taking in a Greek tragedy, and has the same impulse behind it. Popular feeling, as is often the case elsewhere, was in one respect in advance of the blood law.

Even in the wilder tribes it was held an evil thing to kill a child for blood. By old usage a boy was liable for blood so soon as his head had been shaved, i.e. at about two years. For this reason many a mother with one boy put off head-shaving.

The fact that a mere infant could thus be killed shows clearly that punishment of the actual criminal has nothing to do with the custom. The blood-offering is the root of the matter. When I was in Ghoanni a very bad case took place. A Shoshi man shot a little shepherd boy of eight years. The Shoshi had quarrelled with a Ghoanni man, who had flung a burning brand at him. A blow was an unpardonable insult. The Shoshi man refused to swear a besa, and shortly afterwards killed the luckless child, whose only connection with the affair was that he belonged to the same tribe. The matter was hotly disputed. The Shoshi tribe considered it a dirty trick and hunted the man out. They held a large and lengthy council as to whether they should burn his house. But to burn a house for a murder committed outside the tribe was an unheard-of thing. A new law would be required. I urged them to pass one. But unless all the other tribes did so they would find themselves at a disadvantage. The tribes were, in fact, faced with the same difficulties as is now the League of Nations. A Shala man with whom I discussed the case said it was very bad. He would not like to have to kill a child, but "the law is the law. Suppose the murderer has fled and there is no male left but a child? Then you must. It is terrible, but what can you do?"

Nor is the idea of taking "blood of the tribe" very far removed from us. During the Great War I heard an English nurse say: "If a German is put in my ward I will do nothing for him. I'll not even give him a drop of water. They killed my brother!" She wanted "blood of the tribe." It is not only Balkan women who keep up blood-feuds.

The custom of blood was rooted in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, but under Austrian rule was almost abolished. Austrian officials told me that disarming of the populace had greatly aided; for the favourite way of taking blood is to lie in ambush and fire. The law against fire-arms was stringent, and with only sheath-knives it was much more difficult and dangerous work. Murder had become infrequent, except in the forests, where the heavy axes of the woodcutters were sometimes used with deadly effect.

The long feud between the dynasties of Karageorgevitch and Obreno-



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vitch in Serbia is an example of blood.<sup>1</sup> In Montenegro, where I was at the time of the final blood-bath, the peasant saw nothing extraordinary in the extirpation of the Obrenovitches. They had begun it by killing old Karageorge a hundred years or so ago. As for Queen Draga, "she was a whore, and ought to be under the accursed stone-heap."

The peasant did not trouble about the political and Pan-Slav plans that led up to the final crime. Blood was sufficient explanation.

Probably the punishment of stoning to death is connected with the blood laws. Stoning is not necessarily blood-letting. If tradition be true, and the whole community—including his relatives, who were forced to hurl the first stones—overwhelmed the poor wretch with a storm of stones till he was deeply buried under the "prokleta gomila" (accursed heap), he would be stunned and suffocated, and no one individual would be responsible. No blood would be owed. The curse put on each stone added to the horror of his fate.

Vladika Petar I of Montenegro, who first ordered the death-penalty for "blood," had to devise a means to avoid further blood. He therefore ordered the condemned man to be shot by his own near relatives—the men of the bratstvo; for, as we have seen in the case of a murder within the "house," the house cannot owe blood to itself. The bratstvo were at liberty to ransom their man by payment of a fine to the Government. This is tantamount to blood-gelt. But the man would be exiled from the land. Should they elect to shoot him—and it appears that they sometimes did—he was confessed and given the communion, and then led from the prison and allowed to run for his life as the squad fired. If he succeeded in getting away, he was free. If wounded, he was cured if possible. If he was killed, he was clearly guilty, and his death was God's will. That his bratstvo had a good deal to do with his escape seems probable. Later, I am told, the firing-squad was composed of one member from each of a number of tribes. No one could know who had fired the fatal shot, and the man's tribe could not take blood of all the other tribes. That by the beginning of the present century the custom of blood was suppressed in Montenegro is mainly due to the firm rule of the late King Nikola.

A case occurred while I was in the country. A house at Podgoritzza caught fire. A chain of men tried to pass up buckets from the river, but were blocked by the usual crowd that comes to see in all lands. Shpiro Popovitch, governor of the town, on his pony forced a way through, and in so doing accidentally struck a man in the face with his riding-whip. Next day, when Shpiro drove out in his carriage,

<sup>1</sup> A striking example of "blood" has occurred since going to press. The recently appointed Serbian governor of Skoplje, Naumovitch, has officially proclaimed to the populace whom he is striving to Serbize: "Moses said: 'An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth.' I say: 'For a tooth, the whole jaw; for an eye, the whole head!'"



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the man who had been struck leapt from behind a tree in one of the main streets and shot him through the body. Shpiro snatched at his own revolver, fell forward, and collapsed. The two gendarmes, his escort, thought him dead, and at once fired at the assassin and killed him. Shpiro was very badly wounded, but recovered. The family of the dead man then demanded justice. They said that their man had been struck and his and their honour blackened and had then been killed; whereas Shpiro had come off safely. According to old law he owed them for the blow and for the "head." Old King Nikola, who had much horse-sense, said that anyone who restarted the feud should be executed. It was to stop—and stop it did. I heard the case freely discussed. Many there were who declared the blow was unpardonable, and that the man struck had been right to shoot. The ancient tradition was by no means dead.

Vrchevitch gives an interesting case of a Montenegrin blood-feud, the hero of which he met in 1849. The man was a Vukotitch of Kchevo. He married Petrusha, a woman of the Tzutzi tribe. After some years of marriage a Kchevo man killed Petrusha's brother. A wife's brother is not a blood relation. It was in no way his duty to take blood. In fact the Tzutzi had long owed blood to Kchevo.

But as the Tzutzi men delayed taking blood for their man, Petrusha became more and more insistent that her husband should do so, till at last he shot one of his own tribe to satisfy her—a most unusual event. He and his wife and sons then fled for refuge to the Moslems at Nikshitch, and he ended his days by keeping an inn on Turkish territory. The Serb-speaking village Vranka, near Scutari, and most of the handful of Montenegrin shopkeepers in Scutari, all descend from persons who owed blood and fled to the Turk for shelter. They show their gratitude now by posing as "unliberated Serb brothers" and making political difficulties in Albania.

A few instances from Montenegrin ballads show the savagery with which blood was exacted. We must remember that the "Turk" of the ballads is almost always a Moslem Slav.

In *Junatchki Spomenik* we find "The Slaying of Betchko Agimovitch." In 1857, protopope Luka and Serdar Shtepan drank wine together, and boasted of the Turkish heads they had cut off. The young popadija served the wine, and the tears ran down her face like pearls on white silk. Shtepan asked her: "Why canst thou not let us drink our wine in peace?" And she said: "O my cousin, I hear you two boasting as you drink, though you have but little to boast of. Take blood for my born brother, whom the Turks cut down last summer!"

And Shtepan said: "O my sister—thou young popadija—I took blood for him long ago, but I will do so again or lose my head!"

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Shtepan went with a small band to Dugo Pass, lay hidden there three or four days till Betchko, the Turkish arambasha, and twelve Turks came by. Then Shtepan and his band shot them all, and carried the thirteen heads home on stakes as further payment for the popadija's brother.

In 1858, the headmen of Rijeka are drinking wine when news comes that the Turks have killed pope Radosav. They gather a hundred armed men and rush to take blood for him. They fall on a boat full of Turks on the shore of the lake, take thirty-three heads, and put them on stakes where the Moslem women can see "pope Radosav's monument."

In the popular Montenegrin ballad, *Batritch Perovitch*, Batritch is betrayed and killed by his Moslem pobratim, Osman Chorovitch. Pero, his old father, tore at his beard and his eyes in his grief. His brother, Radulé, swore to take blood for him and gathered a band. Through all the summer they wandered on the Banyani mountains, waylaying and killing Turks till they had killed thirty. The band then said: "Nobly hast thou avenged Batritch. Let us return to our homes." But Radulé said he would never know rest till he had taken Osman's head. At that moment Osman and his brother came in sight upon horseback. Radulé and his band dropped into cover beside the track, and, as the two men rode up, fell upon them and killed both, and took their heads. Radulé and his band went home singing and rejoicing, and old Pero said: "Blessed am I, O my son Radulé! So hast thou avenged my Batritch; it is as though you had brought him back to me."

In all the above cases the hatred is intensified by religious fanaticism, but they all illustrate the need to take blood for the blood that has been shed. Even more this is shown in a ballad in *Ogledalo Srpske* in an event in 1844. "The white Vila screamed over the tower of Ilija Ramovitch: 'Evil be to thee, Ilija, that drinkest in the wine-shop. Up with thee, gather a band and take blood for thy brother, Jakshe Kapetan.'" Ilija did as the Vila bade. He gathered a hundred men, and ambushed and slew a party of Turks; cut off fifty heads and carried them home and much loot. The head of the Turkish bairaktar they reckoned as equivalent to that of Jakshe Kapetan. That of the Turkish hodja, Husein, for the head of pope Milutin's son. "As for the rest of the Turkish heads, reckon them in payment of whom you will."

All these facts show that the custom of blood was a solemn duty, recognized by both sides and carried out according to rule. In some way or other the blood shed benefits the soul of the man it has been shed for. One is tempted to compare it with the hungry ghosts whom Odysseus slaked with blood. But I do not think such an idea is consciously recognized.

Both under the old Montenegrin law and the Canon of Lek Dukagin

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there are rules which have to be obeyed. Under Lek's Canon even a man who owes blood cannot be killed under certain circumstances. Debtor and creditor can and do make a moratorium; can swear peace till the harvest has been gathered, or during an attack by an outside enemy. Such a besa is absolutely binding. A man cannot be attacked when he is sheltering strangers. I passed the night at a house in Summa which was in blood. The brothers to whom it belonged went out and bellowed in all directions: "We have guests. Two Shala men, one Scutari man, and a foreign woman." And, having announced this, came back to spend a happy evening in safety.

I once had a Kastrati man to guide me from Kastrati into Hoti. He guided us to a large house in Hoti, whose house-lord received us very hospitably. I soon noticed that there was some sort of joke between my guide and my host. The joke was that they were "in blood." My guide's family owed this Hoti house blood, and he could have been shot at sight were he not under my protection. We all dined together, and it was agreed that probably several bloods would be taken before the affair was settled. The man who owed blood examined a fowl's breast-bone and said that it foretold no evil to the house—which was polite. The meal being over, I was told that as my escort and as their guest he was safe; but that this kind of thing could not go on. He might carry out his bargain and guide me to Bridzha, but no farther. He must go straight back. I was anxious as to his safe return. Whereupon they promised him safe conduct to the tribal frontier, and kept the pledge. He had eaten under their roof and so was safe. I was often assured by men guiding me that it was their duty, should anything befall me, to take blood for me if required.

To take blood for a guest is an even more absolute duty than to take it for a relative. Is this perhaps because a stranger ghost might, if unappeased, be even more troublesome?

For a guest a man must kill even one of his own tribe or family, and will be judged to have acted righteously and receive no punishment. I was told that recently a Montenegrin, flying from justice, refuted in a house at Shala owned by two brothers. The Montenegrin Government offered a rifle, a revolver, and a sum of money to anyone who would hand him over alive or give proof of his death. The elder brother, the house-lord, went away on business for a short time, and during his absence the younger succumbed to temptation. He shot their guest and asked and obtained the reward. The house-lord returned and learned the fate of his guest. "What did the Prince of Montenegro pay you for this?" he asked sternly. On being told he replied: "He did not give you enough. Take that!" and shot his brother dead on the spot. His house had never before betrayed a guest. He lamented his



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brother's death deeply, said the priest who gave me the facts, but the honour of the house had to be cleaned. The man was under his besa.

The host is responsible for his guest from the moment he has accepted him under his roof till sun-down of the day on which he leaves it. A man who gave me a drink of water at a midday halt swore that I was now under his protection till sundown.

The following remarkable case I heard in Dushmani. A certain family was in blood with a man. One member of this family, however, made peace with him and swore a besa of friendship. The family foe was soon after shot dead by the brother of the man who had sworn besa, and by the terms of the besa he felt bound to take blood for his slain friend. He therefore shot his brother, and came wild with grief to confess to the priest the terrible duty which his honour had forced him to perform.

The priests repeatedly assured me that the tribesmen could rarely be made to see that taking blood was a sin at all; whereas they would confess with deep penitence and distress to having broken a fast.

A man who fails to take blood is, among the more remote tribes, dishonoured. So he was once in England. A man could not refuse to fight a duel until well into Victoria's reign; and the French still demand blood for slights to their "honour." When I was in Dushmani the bairaktar had failed to take blood and was an outcast. He tried to speak at a tribal council at which he should have presided, was refused a hearing, and told not to come back till his honour was clean.

The ultimate insult when folk are drinking together is to pass the rakia to such a man behind your back. He cannot then show his face in company again. This custom was formerly used also in Montenegro.

Nothing is too bad for the man who fails to set at rest the soul of his kinsman.

All facts show that the taker of blood kills for the sake of the soul of the dead man and not in order to punish the actual murderer. But not merely for the sake of the dead man, for the family group is the unity. He kills, I think, too, to replace the blood lost by the group.

I think, too, it probable that the clawing of the face at a funeral is also a blood-offering. This is done only by kinsmen, not by outsiders. The North Albanian tribesmen cut their nails to sharp points so as to be sure of drawing blood and tear deep scratches in their temples. The few drops thus contributed by each of several hundred tribesmen might suffice to give the soul relief without in any way weakening the tribe.

The swearing of blood-brotherhood when settling a blood-feud, and also the godfatherhood, denote also a replacement of lost blood in all probability, for the artificial relationship ranks as blood relationship.

Women, though they have greatly supported the custom by urging



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their men to take blood, have rarely taken it themselves. I have found no case in the old Serb and Montenegrin ballads.

In Albania, two cases of blood taken by women of the Bib Doda family, in Mirdita, and the tale of the Mirdite woman who avenged her brother, which I give in another chapter, are the only ones I heard of, and these were over sixty years ago.

But in Montenegro there was a woman living in Antivari, when I was there, who had taken blood. She learnt that a certain man, when drinking at the han, had boasted that he knew both her and her sister to be no better than they should be. While her husband was out she borrowed his rifle and waited for this man outside his own door. When he came out she cried: "You shall never tell another lie!" and shot him dead. Taken before the court, she not only said she had done it, but expressed her readiness to kill anyone else who maligned her, and was enthusiastically acquitted. This is, however, rather a Madame Caillaux affair than real "blood taking."

In Albania it was customary to lay the blame of most blood-feuds on the women. Seduction, abduction, adultery, runaway wives, or the refusal of a girl to marry the man she was betrothed to, in fact lay at the root of very many feuds. The real root was the system of betrothal which gave neither maid nor widow a voice in her fate and forced most unhappy marriages; and with the breaking down of this system much of the cause of feuds will disappear. Feuds in the last few years have greatly decreased.

### 5. BLOOD OFFERINGS

While I was living at Scutari it was still usual to sprinkle blood upon the foundations of a new building. A sheep or lamb, or most often a fowl, was killed on the spot, and the blood being duly sprinkled, the animal was the perquisite of the workmen, who naturally kept up the custom.

In ancient days the life offered was sometimes human. Tradition tells that when the Serb rulers rebuilt the fortress of Scutari in the fourteenth century a young woman was walled up alive in it. For six years the builders strove to build it, but at night the wicked "Vila" pulled it down, and at length told Kralj Vukashin (father of Marko Kraljevitch) that he could only succeed in building the fortress if his wife, or the wife of either of his two brothers, was immured in it. The wife of Uglesh, the second brother, was the victim, and the fortress was finished (*Karadjitch Ballads*, vol. ii).

A similar tale is told of the building of the bridge at Vishegrad in Bosnia; and the tradition was strong in the minds of the people.

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An Austrian engineer in the Herzegovina told me that about 1898 a bridge was built over the Lim. The work was bad, and before long one side gave way. A second engineer was employed to repair it. He miscalculated and made it crooked, and again it fell. A third engineer was sent to rebuild the whole. But meanwhile the tale spread that the bridge was bewitched; that it could be rebuilt successfully only if a maiden were bricked up alive in a buttress; and that the Austrians were about to seize a girl for the purpose. A panic and great local excitement arose, and it was only with some difficulty that the people were persuaded that nothing of the sort was intended and the builders enabled to work without danger of attack and complete the bridge. The strength of the belief makes one suspect that other cases of immuring must have occurred between the fourteenth and the end of the nineteenth century.

In Montenegro the blood of a fowl, goat, or sheep was sprinkled upon the yule-log till very recently.

### 6. HEAD-HUNTING

Of all the trophies collected by man from the beginning, one of the most prized would be his enemy's head.

The wild beast killed in self-defence or for food, and, if not anhungered, left the body where it lay. Man, as he developed consciousness and individuality, wanted a token of his prowess—something that should add terror to the kinsmen of the slain; wanted probably most of all to make sure that his foe was really dead and no ghost could return to torment the slayer; wanted possibly to transfer his enemy's valour to himself.

An arm or a leg could be cut off and the foe still live. A severed head was an unmistakable token of victory.

Thus in very many lands head-hunting has become a passion, and the man who has not yet taken a head is unmarriedable. Travellers go to New Guinea and other remote corners to study the custom; and few realize that head-hunting has but recently died out in Europe, and is not yet quite extinct in the Balkans.

When I travelled in Montenegro at the beginning of the present century all the old men enjoyed telling tales of the heads they and their friends had taken.

Herodotus tells us the Scythians were especially addicted to head-taking. "Every Scythian presents the heads of the foes that fall by his hand to his king; this offering entitles him to a share of the booty he could not otherwise claim" (Bk. IV, c. 64).

It is a far cry from Herodotus, 445 B.C., to A.D. 1906, when Luka

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Jovovitch, in his *Tales of Montenegrin Life*, greets his brethren, the men of Tzrmnitza: "Good morrow, ye greatest heroes in Montenegro, second only to the House of Petrovitch! Well known to the Prince and to all Europe! Ye who one by one cut off a great basketful of Turkish heads!" (i.e. the '76-7 war.)

Serb and Montenegrin alike are insatiable looters, and the Montenegrin junak, as did the Scythian of old, brought the heads he had taken to the booty-sharing.

They gloried in their head records. At Zredbanik Monastery, near Danilovgrad, the local doctor (one of the *intelligentsia*) and a huge young monk, whose flaxen hair streamed to his waist, showed me with pride the tomb of Bajo Radovitch. His weapons and medals were carven upon it, and his epitaph states that he fell in battle with the Turks in 1876, after hewing off fifteen Turkish heads. "And when the Gospodar (i.e. King Nikola) rides by," said the doctor, "he reins his horse and lifts his cap and prays: 'God give thee salvation, Bajo. Fifteen heads to one sword—O thou dobar junak!'"

The subject having cropped up, I asked Krsto how many heads he had then taken. He was greatly embarrassed and confessed with humiliation that he, though a good Montenegrin, had not succeeded in taking a single one. "But I was only seventeen," he pleaded. Someone at once severely said that others even younger had done better.

"O Gospodjitz, why did you ask me that?" he said to me piteously in private afterwards, and I undertook in future to say no more about it on our travels.

A generation ago, in fact, every man went to a border fray or raid with the hope of bringing home a head if possible. The short, heavy handzhar, which in those days each man carried in his sash, was made for slashing, not stabbing. An expert severed a head with one blow. I bought a fine old handzhar, and one of the elders of Njegushi came to see it. The old man sat down cross-legged, unsheathed it, drew his fingers tenderly along the blade, and chanted softly to it: "O my handzhar, how much blood hast thou drunk?—Turkish blood. How many heads hast thou cut off?—Turkish heads."

There were rules for head-taking. If in a fight two Montenegrins wounded the same man, the head belonged to him who drew first blood. Great disputes arose on this question, and I was told of cases in which two men had fought each other almost to the death on the very battlefield over their enemy's corpse.

The reasons given me for head-taking were: "to show how brave you are"; "to shame the enemy"; and "because it is our old custom." Whether they thought it would affect the future life of the deceased I could not ascertain. But I found many Montenegrins—and others



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in the Balkans—had a great horror of amputation of a shattered limb, believing that at the Resurrection they would rise without it. Thus the loss of a head might entail serious consequences. But when two “pobratims” (sworn brethren) went to war, it was the duty of the one to cut off and carry away the head of the other, if slain, to prevent it falling into the hands of the enemy. Even to cut off the head if the man were fatally wounded or so badly wounded that he could not be carried from the field and might be taken by the enemy. Tradition declares this has often been done. This seems to show that it was not so much the separation from the body which mattered as that such an important part of the body should fall into the power of the enemy.

The idea of the sanctity of the head is still strong in Montenegro, and the head is commonly sworn on.

In a crisis of the war in 1915 King Nikola, having to make a statement to the Ministers of the Entente Powers, tried to strengthen it by solemnly swearing its truth on the heads of his children. In the old days the formula in common use for a witness at a trial was: “Before God and upon the heads of twelve men I swear,” etc.

The strong desire to take the foe’s head may have been actuated in part, at any rate, by this belief in the sanctity of the head. Very great efforts were made by the relatives of a beheaded man to obtain his head to bury with his body. Grim tales were told of women who had crawled over the border at night at great risk and brought back their husband’s or brother’s head from the pole on which it was rotting. Such tales were told both sides of the border.

Head-taking raged between Slav, Turk, and Albanian. Until very recently the custom of head-shaving prevailed among all Balkan people. One top-lock—the “perchin” of Serbs and Montenegrins—or side locks or large patches of hair, as with many Albanian tribes, only were left. The popular explanation given in Montenegro for this custom was that if your head were clean-shaven there was no way to carry it save by sticking a finger in the mouth. A Christian, even when dead, would object to a Moslem finger in his mouth. A Moslem, with equal justice, would object to the finger of an unclean Giaour. Therefore a convenient handle was left. The tale is probably one of those invented to explain a custom. It is of interest as showing that folk were quite accustomed to the idea of having their heads carried off some day.

A Ragusan lady gave me a vivid account—as told her by her grandparents—of the horror produced in Ragusa when the Russians enlisted Montenegrins to fight the French troops there during the Napoleonic Wars, and a wild inrush of yelling Montenegrins, with decapitated French heads dripping and dangling at their belts, struck terror even into Napoleon’s hardened troops.



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In the Serbian and Montenegrin ballads we find plenty of tales of head-taking in the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century. But in the Middle Ages there was a good deal of head-cutting in the rest of Europe. To realize the wholesale head-hunting of modern days we must turn to the ballads of Grand Voyvoda Mirko, father of the late King Nikola. Mirko Petrovitch was, in truth, a mediæval chieftain who survived into the second half of the nineteenth century. Krsto still sang how "Mirko rode ever upon his raven black steed in the bloodiest of the fight, and his sword flashed over his black horse as doth lightning from out a cloud. So charged he at the head of his men, his sword in hand, trampling and cutting down Turks."

Brave, fearless, most violent tempered, adorned with a great black moustache and heavy black brows, Mirko spent his life fighting, and singing to the gusle the exploits of his warriors, and modestly made no mention of his own deeds. He wrote *Junatchki Spomenik* (*The Monument of Heroism*) to immortalize the deeds of others.

The South Slavs are great boasters. Anyone who has sat in a Montenegrin pot-house, in peace- or war-time, and listened to tales of what the Serb has done and means to do, knows this. But even allowing for good average boasting the head-cutting sung of by old Mirko is staggering. There is no poetry in any of his songs. But as cut-and-dried accounts of savage warfare in Europe they are incomparable. The tale of nearly every fight ends with a list of heads taken and the booty. A few examples are all we have space for. In *The Slaying of Chulek Beg*, 1852, after the fight they count "Three hundred Turkish heads, and among them the head of Chulek Beg. . . . Off went the Serbs singing and carrying Turkish turbans and shining Turkish weapons and Turkish heads upon oaken stakes, and among them Chulek's head. . . . This is what happened, and true it is. House-lord, give me a glass of wine—good wine and a litre of it—that an old man may drink to these heroes."

In *The Fight at Drobnjak*, 1855: "As the Turks rushed from the burning tower the young Montenegrins seized them and cut off each one's head. And behold! there came the three Mladitches bearing dead Turkish heads, and they cried to Serdar Bogdan of the frontier: 'Here, O Serdar, we have cut off for thee fifty Turkish heads and stripped off all the clothing.'"

*The Slaying of Betchko Agimovitch* is a tale of blood-vengeance. A head has already been taken for that of a young Montenegrin, but a band of eight Montenegrins go out to take yet more heads. They lurk on a track, ambush some Turks, shoot twelve, and "cut off the heads of them all and seize their twelve horses. Then with the Turks' clothing and the Turkish heads upon stakes they went home to the

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village of the Markovitches; and before the Serdar's white tower they set up eleven heads for the fair head of Jovan, whom they had avenged. But the head of Betchko they carried to Cetinje, to the tower above the monastery, where many an one has been set on a stake ere now, and many another shall be, God willing! Heads of Pashas and Vezirs, of Agas and Begs, of brave Turkish leaders like unto Chulek Beg and the Bulukbasha. A fine booty was this of Serdar Stepan and great honour it won for him. God grant him long life!"

Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who went as British Envoy to Montenegro in 1848, broke it gently to the then ruler, Vladika Petar II, that the sight of rotting heads on the tower was disagreeable to British envoys. But the practice continued. A Russian traveller, Preis, also protested in 1841. "At Cetinje, the seat of the Montenegrin Vladika (bishop), all pleased me but the tower set round with Turkish heads. The Vladika is opposed to this inhuman and savage custom, but will not abolish it lest he should offend his people." Nevertheless, Preis describes the Vladika as "a man of masculine beauty and immense stature. The more one talks with him the more one admires him, both as man and as ruler of Montenegro." Remarks which curiously show the very small amount of power possessed by the said "ruler" when it came to a question of a national custom; or had the Vladika himself perchance a sneaking affection for head-taking?

In *The Avenging of Pope Radosav* Mirko sings how, to atone for this one pope, "Thirty-three did they cut off. . . . Not the devil a man did they let live . . . and away they went to Bijelopavlitich, above the bloody town of Shpuzh" (then Turkish), "carrying the heads upon stakes, and they stuck them up where the Turkish wives and women in the town could see them and know them as a monument to Pope Radosav. May the ravens and crows tear the heads and the foxes gnaw them."

These are all songs of border frays. More serious work was done at Kolashin in 1858. Here 1,000 heads are said to have been taken. "I was on Kum mountain and I saw it myself," says the poet proudly. In *The Slaying of Selim Pasha*, in 1862, 1,600 heads are taken, including those of the Pasha and his two sons, and borne in triumph: a grim procession. In *The Fight at Nikshitiz* in the same year the score is given as 3,700.

In most cases the plunder was piled together, the heads were brought, and the booty shared all round. A good horse or two and some fine weapons were reserved for the "Gospodar"—the late King Nikola. They were preserved in the palace and at the arsenal. Poor old Nikola's throne and his goods were seized by his grandson, the present King of Serbia. Did he loot the trophies, too?

When old Mirko roared his songs of triumph to the gusle, and

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recorded Montenegro's fights for freedom, little did he dream that his Montenegrins would one day be crushed, not by the Turk but by the troops of his own great-grand-nephew.

So he happily chronicled 2,200 heads taken at the Dugo Pass in 1861; 2,700 at Kiti in the same year; 360 at Novoselo; 600 at Martino-vitch, and 1,000 more mortally wounded. "But the Turks carried off their wounded lest the Montenegrins should behead them too." The last song in the book is *The Fight at Sharantzi*, in 1862, when 1,200 heads were taken. Without reckoning minor fights we find that between thirteen and fourteen thousand heads are claimed by the poet to have been taken in one year.

That many actually were taken we learn from Vialla de Sommières, staff-major of the Second Division of the Illyrian Army (French) at Ragusa, who in 1820 narrates that the dried head of Mahmud Bushatli "is preserved at the Monastery at Cetinje in the Vladika's own room, and shown always with new pride." When staying at the Monastery of Ostrog, he took walks "of two or three leagues in all directions. What a sight! Everywhere on the borders are heads on poles, and the summits of the mountains, too, show the madness of mankind. They are the heads of Turks made prisoners by the Montenegrins, and their great numbers show how frequent is this kind of execution."

It is not at all surprising that the Turks, from time to time, did their best to root out these savage border tribes who so harried them. We have sent plenty of punitive expeditions over the Indian frontier and in Africa with less provocation.

After all, Turk and Montenegrin fought with equal arms. It has been reserved for us, in the latest days of civilization, to send aeroplanes and hurl bombs upon Asian and African villages which have no anti-aircraft defences, and to slaughter men, women, and children indiscriminately.

The last heads that I heard of as being cut off were those of three Montenegrins killed in a border fight in August 1912, when the Montenegrins were trying to force the Turks to declare war, and fighting was going on pretty freely, though war was not yet formally declared.

I spoke with the uncle of one of the deceased. He took the beheading very calmly, as though it were an accident that might befall anybody's uncle. The heads had been taken by Moslems, but whether Turk, Serb, or Albanian was not discovered.

During the war noses—not heads—were taken. This was, I think, partly because the army no longer carried the handzhar. When war was declared in October 1912, Kovatchevitch, the lame schoolmaster at Podgoritzza, "Professor of Modern Languages," and proud of having been in British employ in Egypt, said to me gleefully: "Now you will



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see plenty of noses! Even baskets full." I told him sternly that such conduct would disgust all Europe. He flew into a rage and declared nose-cutting was a national custom and Turks not human beings. As a result of my remarks nose-cutting was forbidden on the Antivari front, where General Martinovitch commanded. The military attachés who were carefully shepherded there, and never allowed anywhere else till things were made tidy, strenuously denied that nose-cutting (and castration) had taken place. Only the Spanish attaché, whom nobody seemed to think a Great Power, strayed from this little flock and saw—and photographed—what happened. On the other fronts mutilation went on freely. I saw nine victims who had survived—hideous spectacles. The nasal bone was hacked right through and the whole upper lip removed.

The Montenegrins, as they recounted freely, went round after each fight mutilating the wounded. In most cases the poor wretches died of the extra hæmorrhage. My Montenegrin patients boasted one and all of the noses they had taken, and wanted to be cured so as to take more. They had not left a nose on a corpse between Berani and Ipek, they said. When a Russian doctor wanted to take me as assistant to Ipek, a message came in double-quick time to say that district was closed to all foreigners. The slaughter and savagery there was too bad for Western eyes. The men told with shouts of laughter how they had mutilated living victims and said: "Go home and show your wife how pretty you are." And added as an interesting fact that Moslem blood was quite black. The desire to take a nose was so great that a man whose hands were not free would seize his enemy's nose in his teeth and try to bite it off. A Montenegrin gendarme once told me the tale of how he did so. But it is worth a separate chapter.

Driving up the zigzag from Cattaro one day, my carriage was stopped by a freight-wagon across the road, from behind which came savage yells and shrieks. As no notice was taken of my driver's shouts to let us pass, I jumped out and ran round. Some six or seven men were fighting like wild beasts. As we were on the Austrian side of the frontier I knew they were unarmed, and I did not risk being shot. So, with an umbrella, I intervened. The men were all mad-drunk. One had his teeth firmly fixed in another's nose and hung on like a bull-dog, while the blood dripped freely from the ends of his enemy's long moustache. The other men set on the biter, who seemed to be fighting for his life. Just as I arrived they tore him off and hung him over the precipice by the slack of his breeches while one man fetched the spare whippetree with heavy iron hooks on the ends, and swung it up with the clear intention of bashing the unlucky wretch's skull in and then dropping him over the precipice. I used the worst Serbian oaths I knew and shouted to them to let him go at once and move the wagon out



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of my way. How dared they block the road? They were paralysed with amazement. The greatest use that I know of military training is that if you order a trained man to "Halt" in a sufficiently bullying tone he usually obeys mechanically. It acted this time and undoubtedly stopped a murder. They rolled off, moved the wagon, and obeyed a further order to drive on. I watched them descend the zigzags peaceably.

Many heads were taken in the wars of 1876-7. Poor Canon McColl was jeered at and discredited when he came from the seat of war and said he had seen heads on stakes and that the heads were those of Turks. Gladstone had represented the Balkan Christians as something like angels—never having lived among them—and the Canon was completely disbelieved. But truth will out. About twenty-five years afterwards I was at the Grand Hotel at Cetinje. An English parson and his wife arrived and talked with some Montenegrin officials who were dining there, spoke French, and wore nice frock-coats. They talked of Turks, and the reverend gentleman mentioned Canon McColl's foolish blunder. "Of course, no one believed him." "But why not?" asked Miouskovitch (afterwards Minister of Foreign Affairs), completely puzzled, "in a war naturally one sees decapitated heads." Then, seeing the horror on the other one's face, he added hastily: "But when one teaches the children to put cigarettes in the mouths—no, that is a bit too strong (*c'est un peu fort, ça*)." For one moment the Balkans were unveiled.

Just as heads were carried by the hair-lock, so noses, as shown to me, were carried by the moustache. A woman, one of the camp followers, took them from her capacious pocket along with some other human fragments, which I will not particularize.

Maybe British rule will have stopped head-hunting in New Guinea before the custom of collecting human fragments ceases in the Balkans.

After all, it is a matter of taste. A dead head is a nasty thing, even though salted, as I was told used to be done to make it keep. But I do not know that keeping one is worse than keeping up a blockade after "peace" has been proclaimed and starving the late foe along with his women and children. And we did that.

### 7. THE MONTENEGRIN GENDARME'S TALE

(I have altered some proper names. Otherwise the tale is as told me.)

It was a pot-house. You could not call it by a more dignified title. It had all the dirt and discomfort of a native han and none of a han's picturesqueness. But Stana, Krsto's cousin, was inordinately

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proud of it. To her it represented years and years of toil to feed and educate her orphaned son, and seemed the last word in progress and civilization. It had glass windows—always shut; and an Austrian stove—always burning. It had broken-down bent-wood chairs and a table with a filthy, patterned European cloth. Yet filthier European machine-lace curtains of hideous design darkened the windows. Hundreds of frowsy picture post cards and fly-blown advertisements of Italian and Austrian liqueurs covered the walls. Flies crawled everywhere, and rose in a fizzing mass from the unwashed plates on the table when anyone moved.

Not that there was much space to move, for the room was blocked by four rickety wooden bedsteads, and untidy heaps of dull, mud-coloured sheets and wadded coverlets oozing dirty rags made the close atmosphere yet more unsavoury.

Except myself, no one noticed these details. The inn was reckoned one of the best in Cetinje of those which were for "the people." Stana had satisfied "a long-felt want" when she started it. Two of the four beds were let permanently to the gendarmerie at "pension" terms, so that she had a certainty to go upon; and the other two were seldom unlet. Moreover, when you have one gendarme several others are sure to call for refreshments.

Stana was busy chopping onions for a stew, which was calculated to attract gendarmes at midday, and the smell of the onions, as they sizzled in a sea of fat, drowned the odour of stale sweat and unwashed humanity.

It penetrated even beneath the piled-up coverlets on the farther bed. They heaved, and there was a muttered oath. I had not noticed till then that the bed was occupied.

"It is Mitar," said Stana. "Poor man, he was on night duty till four this morning. It is really Stjepan's bed, but he is on duty now, so I have let it to Mitar for the day. One earns much this way from gendarmes. Poor lads, they had no homes here, and I have made it all nice for them."

So she, indeed, thought. But not in any London slum could such squalor and overcrowding be found.

"Why do you not come and board with me?" asked Stana as she stirred the pot. "It would be much cheaper for you than the Velika Locanda [Grand Hotel], and I would put clean sheets on a bed for you. In the day, when the gendarmes are asleep, you could write your books on the table."

I said I did not much like so many beds in one room, and she replied that I could sleep with her in the outhouse. I was saved from further parley by the appearance of a pair of hairy legs from beneath the bedding, and Mitar, throwing the frowsy heap aside, sat up, rubbed

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his eyes, straightened his crumpled uniform, and demanded his "dokolnitze" (white woollen gaiters), which were drying over the cooking-pot on the stove.

"They are dry now," said Stana, "and here are thy 'opanke' (hide sandals)." Mitar was busied for some minutes hooking the thirty-two pairs of brass hooks which fastened the gaiters; he put on his ragged socks and the opanke, thrust his revolver through his sash, and his toilet was complete.

"Wouldst thou wash?" asked Stana doubtfully, picking up a tin can of water. Mitar inspected his grimy hands, decided they "would do," and said "No!" abruptly. He lounged to the table, sat down, and called for rakia. "Two glasses," pointing at me.

"Mitar," said Stana as she set the glasses and a bottle on the table, "wants to speak to you. Tell the Gospodyitza all about it," she said encouragingly.

"God give thee health," said Mitar, solemnly tossing off a glass of rakia. Then, as I refused with thanks to accept more than one glass, he finished the measure himself. Thus heartened, he asked abruptly: "When do you go back to London?"

"Soon," said I.

"I am coming with you," said Mitar firmly. "I shall be your kavass. You need not pay me. Only take me to London; give me bread, and anything else your generosity pleases."

"In London we do not have kavasses," said I.

"He will serve you and do what you wish," said Stana, who knew the scheme. "Let me tell the Gospodyitza," she whispered to him loudly. "It is like this: Mitar wishes to marry, and he thinks if he comes with you he can marry your servant-maid and live in your house." Mitar nodded approval.

"But why does he not marry a Montenegrin maiden?" I asked.

"Because," said Stana tragically, "he is very unlucky. He has already been married three times, and in our Church we are not allowed to marry more than three times."

"I have been told," said Mitar, "that in the beautiful Church of England a man may even marry fifteen times. Is it so?"

"I believe he may," said I, "but I have never heard of a case."

"Good!" cried Mitar joyfully. "I will go to London and join your beautiful Church and marry a fourth wife!"

Stana was startled. As a devout member of the Orthodox Church of Montenegro she felt that Mitar would be risking his immortal soul. "It is not really Mitar's fault," she explained; "it is the Metropolitan's. If he would give permission, Mitar would never think of leaving our Church. Wouldst thou, Mitar? Tell about it."



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"I am fifty," began Mitar solemnly, "and, by St. Peter of Cetinje, I have been unlucky. When I was a lad my father married me to a maiden of the Piperi, but she died when the baby was born. Then came war and I went to fight the Turks in the Herzegovina (1876). We fought almost to Mostar. But I was shamed in the eyes of my comrades, for I had not taken a head. Others younger than I had taken heads and sent them home to their mothers, and I, never an one. I swore in the next fight to take one or die. I fixed my eyes on a Turk and slashed at him with my handzhar, but he fired his pistol and caught me there"—he showed a deep scar on his right forearm—"the handzhar fell from my hand. I snatched my pistol with my left hand, but as I fired he sliced me with his knife and the pistol fell, too." (He showed two fingers of his left hand stiff and contracted.) "Both my hands were useless, but I saw nothing but that Turk's head. I must have it. I flew at him like a wolf and fixed my teeth in his nose. God! how I bit into him! And I knew nothing more till I woke up in the Russian field-lazaret. There was a Russian nun; she told me my sworn brother, Joko Shtepitch, had brought me in—God rest his soul. He shot the Turk through the head. My teeth were locked in the Turk's nose as we fell together. Joko severed it with his knife. He knew I had sworn to take a head, and that now I should not have another chance. With us, you know, a nose counts as a head. He could not carry me and the head too, so he thrust the nose into my breeches pocket. I found it there and it did me more good than all the doctor's stuff. I was ill a long time. The wounds went dirty. I saw no more fighting, but when peace was made the Gospodar gave me this medal"—he tapped a bronze medal on his breast—"and as the French Minister wanted a kavass, I was recommended to the post. I married again; my wife did washing for the Legation, and I was kavass. So help me, St. Petar, never have I seen anything so wonderful as the way they lived at the Legation. I had a uniform with gold embroidery and meat every day. And when the other Ministers came to dinner . . . 'champagnia'—wine of all sorts. Not our common wine but French wine—worth, they say, even ten francs a bottle."

"Ten francs for a bottle of wine!" cried poor Stana, "ten francs! But it is a sin. May God forgive them!"

"It is true," said Mitar, "and you would be surprised how much was left in the glasses. That was all mine. The Minister never wanted it. I never again had such a good master. But not so good as his wife. Madama, she was not like a woman; she was like one of God's angels. Beautiful as the Vila. Her hair was gold—all gold in little curls round her forehead. Her skin was white like the snow—red and white. Not like these dark Montenegrin women of ours." (He pointed scornfully



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at poor toilworn Stana, and went on speaking as though to himself). "Her voice was like no other in the world. She asked me to say things for her in Serbian. Then she said them—not as we speak, but it was very beautiful. She used to play music and sing—sing like a bird. She never gave me an order. She would ask, 'Molim Vas' (If you please). And her clothes! They were beautiful. All allafranga—not like what our women wear." (Again he indicated poor Stana and her rags.) "I would have done anything in the world for Madama—died for her, killed anyone that touched her. I thought I should spend all my life at the French Legation—and then she died of fever. God rest her soul." He crossed himself gravely three times and sat silent, staring vaguely.

Dirty, grizzled, scarred, steeped in barbarism, capable of rending his enemy's flesh with his teeth, I wondered what like was the French-woman who had so wrought upon his savage soul. "We are all in the gutter," said Lord Darlington in the play, "but some of us are looking at the stars."

Tears stood in Mitar's eyes. He went on: "Monsieur the Minister would not stay here without her. He took her body to France and he never came back. He wept when he went. He gave me money enough to start a han and a photograph of Madama. 'You served her well, Mitar,' he said; 'she always spoke well of you.' She always spoke well of me! I shall never forget that. I took a house in the Katunska Ulitza and opened an inn. I called it Hôtel de France. I put Madama's portrait on the wall.

"I had a good wife. She cooked and worked very hard. Many people came to the hotel. But all is as God wills. She fell ill and coughed, and grew as thin as paper, and in the winter she died. I was left with the inn and two little children. What could I do? I had no sister or mother to work for me. I married again—the widow of old Mirko Ljubovitch, who kept a han. She had a little money. I thought she would know how to manage my inn. But she was a wicked woman——"

"A hussey, a regular hussey!" put in Stana.

"She drank with the men; she cheated me; she neglected my children. Then I heard she was false to me; everyone knew before I did—I charged her with it. She swore she was innocent, and shrieked it was a nice thing for a woman to have to sleep with the photograph of a foreign woman hanging over her bed. She raged. She said she was sick of hearing of Madama and how good and beautiful she was. My God! I was furious. I shouted: 'If you dare say another word against Madama I will kill you!' She cowered like a dog and prayed me to pardon her. She said she had not meant it; she said—the Devil alone knows what she said.

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"There was peace for some days. Then I came home one night and the photograph was gone from the wall. The frame was there—empty. It was as though a piece of my living heart was torn out. It was gone—gone. She laughed like the devil she was. She told me she had torn it out and spat upon it and thrown it into the fire. I took a stick and I beat her till I could strike no more. I threw her into the street half-dead. I did not care if she lived or died. They took her to the house of her lover—or one of them. She had plenty.

"I divorced her for infidelity. That was eight years ago. I ought to have sold the inn then. I could not manage it without a woman. The Metropolitan would not let me marry again. He says I have had three wives. I said the first was only half a wife, for she did not live a year. As for the third, not half of her was mine—if that. But he forbade me to jest about religion. The inn went all wrong. They sold it to pay my debts. There was I, poor devil, with nothing at all. So I enlisted in the gendarmerie." He stared at the stove.

"Where are your children?" I asked.

"Dead—both dead."

"Now," said Stana cheerfully, "if you will take Mitar to London with you, Gospodyitza, he can marry an Englishwoman, and, God willing, she will be a good wife to him and bear him a son to carry on his line. Truly he has been unfortunate."

There was a pause. Mitar gazed at me with the eyes of a lost dog.

It is an ill thing to shatter hope. "I fear," said I as kindly as I could, "that this is quite impossible. I am sorry. But I have no work for Mitar in London. Nor could he find work there, for he does not speak English."

Mitar looked at me and saw it was final. He stood up, straightened his uniform, and settled his revolver in its place.

"That is finished, then," said he. "No matter. All is as God wills. I will take a walk before dinner."

He saluted and strode to the door. Nor, although I often saw him on duty, did he ever again refer to his life's history.

*SECTION V*

BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH

1. Birth customs in Montenegro and Albania.
2. Marriage customs in North Albania. Albanian virgins.
3. The Levirate in Albania.
4. Rights of husband over wife.
5. Marriage customs in Montenegro. Sworn virgins. The Levirate.
6. Divorce.
7. Marriage of an outsider into a tribe. Forbidden degrees in Montenegro.
8. Death customs in Montenegro. Funeral feasts in Serbia. All Souls' Day.
9. Death customs in North Albania.



## SECTION V

### BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH

#### I. BIRTH

##### MONTENEGRO

THE birth of a son caused great rejoicing; that of a daughter was something like a calamity. When the present Queen of Italy was expecting her first child, Montenegro awaited the event with great excitement. Old King Nikola had a gun mounted ready to salute the arrival of his grandson; orders went round that we were all to rejoice by putting candles in our windows. The hotel put a row ready in my room. We waited. The Diplomatic Circle in those days lunched and dined at the Grand Hotel along with the Swiss tutor to the Princes. At lunch-time in bounced a Perianik (Royal guard) and saluted. The tutor was summoned to the Palace. We waited breathlessly. Back came the tutor; he paused at the door, sighed, and murmured sadly: "Excellences—*Nous avons une fille!*" Poor Princess Yolanda. Cetinje tried to look as though nothing had happened. The gun was silent; the candles unlit. The general gloom was broken by the British Consul, who cried out sturdily: "I don't care what the etiquette is, I will *not* condole with him!"

When I was in Montenegro the treatment of a parturient woman was most barbaric. The villagers pooh-poohed calling in a doctor, no matter how bad the patient was: "He has never had a child; what can he know about it?" They shrieked with laughter at the very idea. Old women, who were supposed to know, attended the woman so soon as labour pains began. Their duty was to make her walk up and down the hut ceaselessly. If she was too exhausted to go on, two women supported her under the armpits, and they all took it in turns to keep her on the move. She must neither be allowed to sit nor lie down, they declared, else the child would never drop out. They explained that they always put plenty of straw down if it was a stone floor, that the child's head might not be broken. If birth was impossible without surgical aid, the wretched woman was walked up and down till she died. I heard of a terrible case where the woman died after being walked about continuously for four days and nights. I scolded them severely for not calling in a doctor. They said they had not done so

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because in a similar case the doctor had killed the child to save the woman; and they believed that if walked up and down another day the birth would have taken place. The men are all turned out of the house for the birth, and usually the unmarried girls also. So soon as the birth is announced, all the women of the *bratstvo* and other neighbour women hasten to the house and take gifts of bread, wine, roast meat, eggs, etc. They make a feast and share it with the women and children of the house. If the child is a first-born, the grandmother (mother's mother) hastens, so soon as she hears the news, to bring a cradle, the swaddling-bands, and the cradle cover. It is her duty to provide these. The cradle is a solid wooden one. The cradle cover she has made, spun, and woven herself of wool. This "*pokrivatz*" (cover) is parti-coloured, and often has tassels or fringes. It is thick and very heavy, and more like a rug than a cradle cover. A long band of the same material with tasselled ends serves to bind it firmly right over the cradle. Such covers are used also in Bosnia, the Herzegovina, North Albania, and, I believe, other Balkan districts. Nothing can be better fitted slowly to asphyxiate the child, and that many have gradually died for lack of light and fresh air I do not doubt.

All the women of the *bratstvo* and other neighbours crowd in round the newly delivered mother and bring gifts of food. If she has borne a son, a whole crowd of men come next day and rejoice and drink *rakia*. In 1903 I was at the house of one of the Vasojevitch tribe at Berani when news came of the birth of his first grandson. He set off at once on horseback, and on his return described with glee how, together with a crowd of male relatives, he had drunk *rakia* and sung songs all day round the mother and child. I said I wondered they had not killed her, which greatly surprised him. After two days of incessant row and crowds, the woman has to get up and begin again to fetch wood and water. She is unclean for forty days, so must not make bread nor cook food. The consequence of starting heavy toil so early is not unfrequently a displacement of the womb. I was very often asked to prescribe for women who had had one child and never another. Nothing would induce them to consult a doctor. Another consequence was that death from hæmorrhage sometimes ensued. A fine healthy girl, daughter of a cousin of King Nikola, died thus by the wayside, forced to fetch a heavy barrel of water on her back three days after her confinement. When I expressed horror, everyone was surprised. They said: "Our women are accustomed to it." When I said that as it was her first confinement she could not be accustomed to it, they merely replied: "It was the will of God."

At the end of the forty days (if she survives) the woman is churched outside the church door. Meanwhile a pope runs into the church with

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the baby and holds it up to the altar; returns with it; gives it to the mother, and mother and babe enter the church.

It was impossible to obtain statistics of those who died in, or soon after, childbirth. But the number was evidently high. Those who were sufficiently sturdy produced at least a child a year for many years, of which the majority died young.

Some of these women were delivered by the track-side when carrying heavy burdens to the bazaar. An aunt of the late King Nikola used to boast that she had borne a child on the zigzag leading to Cattaro, had rested some hours, carried the baby and her bundle down to the market, sold her goods, and returned up the mountain with her baby. Such cases were boasted of as typical, without reckoning the "massacre of the innocents." And in spite of everything some large families survived. If "Save the Children" methods are adopted and the rate of birth continues, at no distant date the Balkans must make a further thrust into Europe to gain territory for the surplus population. The very numerous Slavs who have settled in France since the war will also tend to Slavize West Europe.

*Adoption.*—In Serbian an adopted son is called "posinak" (half-son); and an adopted daughter "pocherka" (half-daughter).

In Montenegro I did not come across a case of adoption; and where the unity of the family group is so strong the adoption of an outsider would naturally be uncommon. An outsider, if adopted, ranked by Church law as born son and marriage was forbidden with his adopted "consanguines" to the eighth degree.

In old days it appears that a symbolic ceremony took place at adoption. The ballad of Nahod Momir (the Foundling Momir) tells how the Serbian Tsar, Stefan of Prizren, when out hunting, found a child wrapped in leaves on the mountain-side. As it was a boy he took it home. Having but a daughter, he thanks God for thus sending him a son. His Tsaritzza, to whom he gave the babe, was delighted. "She drew him through her silken breasts that the child might be a child from her heart." Karadjitch adds in a footnote: "As if she had given birth to him. It is said that now (1845) this is done by those who adopt a child." When the boy grows up the nobles are jealous of him. They give him seven-year-old rakia and drugged wine, lay him unconscious in his (adopted) sister's room, and tell the Tsar that he is making love to his sister. The Tsar, horrified, cries that they are "born brother and sister," and orders the youth to be hanged in spite of the protests of innocence made by the youth and maiden. He is hanged on a dry olive-tree, and she goes out and hangs herself upon it later.

The Tsaritzza, in despair, accuses the Tsar of killing both her children. The dry olive bursts into leaf and flower. The Tsar has the nine false



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nobles hanged and buries the two poor children. From the youth's grave there grows a pine-tree, and from the maiden's a vine which entwines it.

Different from this is a form of so-called adoption which existed till well into the nineteenth century, I was told, in Ragusa and parts of Dalmatia, and which still exists in Serbia. A household needing a servant goes to a poor woman with a number of children and buys outright the services of a girl for a term of years, during which she may not leave her master. This is called "adopting." At the end of her term her master has to provide her with a dowry, and sometimes, too, with a husband. She calls her adopters "father," "brother," etc.

When I once suggested to a poor Montenegrin woman that she should send some of her many daughters to be servants, she was horrified, and declared she had not fallen so low. Nor did I understand why, till I learnt that the unfortunate so-called adopted girl, who is entirely in the hands of her "adopters," is liable to be shamefully abused and does not now rank as a blood relative. One of the workers among the Serbian refugees in Corsica during the war told me she had to deal with many cases of the birth of illegitimate children; and only too often, when the unfortunate young mother was asked who was the father of her child, she replied, "My father," or "My brother." In every such case the poor girl turned out to be an "adopted," sold into service by her parents for a term of years, and helpless in the hands of unscrupulous "adopted relatives," whom she addressed as "father" and "brother."

This is the last remnant of a custom which the archives of Ragusa show to have been not uncommon in the Middle Ages. Poor Serbs and Albanians bound themselves or their children for a term of service. Jirecek mentions that parents sometimes sold their children as slaves; and that some persons sold themselves. The *Acta et Diplomata Res Albanie Illustrantia* gives numerous examples. Thus in 1377 Dobrussa, daughter of Goyslav of Albania, promises her services for six years, her master being bound to "give her food and clothing, and consider her as his own daughter and at the end give her in marriage." In Ragusa in the early days of the nineteenth century, the wedding of such a girl was made the occasion of a family festivity. The condition that the girl was to rank as daughter was, no doubt, inserted to prevent abuse in the days when "adoption" was, indeed, believed to equal consanguinity. The belief and the protection afforded by it are now lost.

In 1387 Radoslav Busicovitch of Dulcigno hires out his sister, Grachina, for ten years; and Caria of Scutari hires out his son to Albert, a doctor at Ragusa, who is to feed and clothe him in a manner befitting a servant.



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In 1392 Bogavach Cuiavich of Rudine of his own free will releases from servitude Radaca, daughter of John of Albania, whom he had bought of Braycho Ucarich.

This seems to have been the case of an actual slave. But the lot of others, when sold for a long term of service, can have been little better than slavery unless they fell into good hands.

### ALBANIA

I heard of a similar custom of thus selling children for a term of years in Malacastra in South Albania. Here poor Moslems sometimes sent their daughters as far as Constantinople; and I was told that some of the Albanian beys thus purchased servant-girls from their mothers, and at the end of the term dowered them and married them to peasants on the estate. The Italian Consul at Valona, the first time I was there, told me he had thus purchased a servant girl.

*Birth.*—In Albania, as in Montenegro, childbirth received but the most ignorant treatment. The death-rate of mothers and children was high.

There was great rejoicing among the mountain tribes when a boy was born and proportionate disappointment over a girl. For a son, especially a first-born, the whole family group turned out and fired rifles.

Some kind of spiritual relationship was held to exist between the child and the woman who cut the umbilical cord; but I learnt no particulars.

As in Montenegro, even in the towns there was the greatest reluctance to summon medical aid. In Scutari one day the Austrian doctor was summoned to a Moslem woman who was in the last stages of exhaustion. He found the child was already dead, and said that to save the woman's life it must be removed at once. The family refused to believe or permit this and dismissed him. Some hours later they fetched him again—but she was dead.

On the birth of a child, both in Scutari and the mountains, all the women neighbours go at once to visit the mother and take offerings of eggs. For a boy, two, four, six, or eight—an even number—are brought; for a girl, one, three, five, or seven. One egg is broken over the child's face to protect it from the Evil Eye. Presumably this makes the child unrecognizable or hideous.

Both in Albania and Montenegro, and I believe in all Balkan lands, infants are swaddled. The cradle is of wood and serves as a packing-case in which to carry the child on its mother's back. In Scutari the cradles are very gaily painted with conventional patterns of flowers and birds,

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etc. There is a wooden grating—a ladder of laths—inside the cradle, on which the child rests upon a cushion or mattress. It is covered usually with the cotton-stuffed coverlet (“jorgan”) of the East, and over all is the thick cradle cover above described.

### 2. MARRIAGE

Marriages in the old days might be called “political.” They were alliances made by the head of the house with the consent of his brethren, for the purpose of strengthening the “house” and thereby the tribe, exactly as up to the present day Royal alliances have been made. The two young people had no voice in the matter, and were often betrothed before birth. A man would promise the next daughter born to him to a chief of another tribe who had a newly born son. The bride was purchased. In Montenegro, and, I believe, in the other Balkan lands, only a symbolic payment is now made. Among the Northern mountain tribes of Albania the bride-price, I found, was still paid in money or kind.

#### ALBANIA

Among the mountain tribes I found antique usages. House-lords were anxious to dispose of their daughters and obtain wives of good stock for their sons. Early betrothal they declared necessary. Later on you could not find a good wife for your son. They were already disposed of. Everywhere they declared there were fewer women than men. In Malsia e Madhe the price for a girl of good family was twenty napoleons: ten were paid on betrothal and the balance when the girl was handed over. I saw infants in the cradle who were already sold. In this district the age for marriage had been raised lately, and some fathers told me they would not marry a girl under sixteen nor a boy under eighteen unless the house was very short of women to do the work. Then a boy of sixteen might be married to an older woman, sometimes to a widow. In the Pulati and Dukagini tribes girls were still sometimes married at thirteen and fourteen, and boys at fifteen or sixteen. I met a man of thirty who had a son of fifteen. His father had married him to a widow of thirty. She was now old, and he complained bitterly that he could not get rid of her.

In Pulati and Dukagini the bride-price was less—sixteen to eighteen napoleons as a rule. An elderly widow might change hands for a rifle or some other article. In all these districts, if a man lost his wife he was sometimes hard put to it to find money for another. A man with many sons found it not easy to wive them all well. There was complaint





PLATE VII.—BOGA BOY IN FULL DRESS  
(See p. 23)

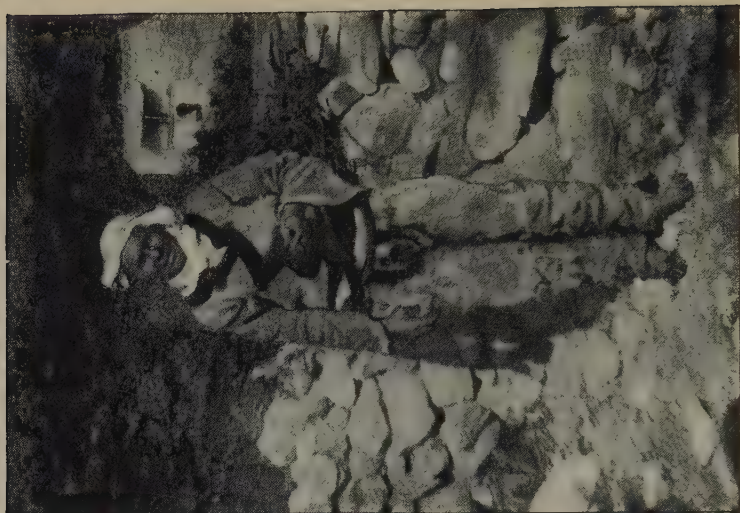


PLATE VIII.—AN ALBANIAN VIRGIN



## Birth, Marriage, and Death

of the shortage of women. This, I believe, is largely caused by the high rate of mortality in childbirth and the extremely hard lives of the women.

A girl, once betrothed, is the property of the family which has bought her, and must be *intacta virgo* when handed over. The most important object of marriage is to obtain sons. A sonless man had no one to avenge him, and his soul would never rest. Therefore in old days, when a girl was handed over, it was usual that the couple should cohabit, but no marriage ceremony should take place till a son was born. The Church has actively fought this custom and almost abolished it. But some cases still occur. Even when the unfortunate woman bore several daughters she might still be treated as worthless; and a married woman who has borne only daughters and is left as a widow has not the right to stay in the family house, but may be permitted to do so. If this is not allowed, her own nearest male relative has the right to sell her again—cheap. I heard of a nephew who had sold his aunt twice.

In a report on the missionary work in Albania made by the Franciscan father Donato Maria di Trento in 1740, he states that the priests are doing all they can to prevent parents from allowing the betrothed to cohabit before marriage, which custom, he says, is universal, and describes as "a most foul torrent of universal concubinage." "They will not contract marriage till offspring is obtained."

Girls being thus married without any choice of their own, and being miserable in strange surroundings, were naturally apt to run away. In the above report this is constantly mentioned as cause of great trouble and feud. Thus Padre Candido reports from Gruda, January 31, 1740: "Women are running away every day, even after marriage." And P. Bonaventura says: "The women are running away *a grandissima furia*."

The custom of child betrothal and payment of parents is described and signed by thirteen padres and the Bishop of Scutari in 1731, and it is stated that it is great disgrace for the betrothed to see each other before they cohabit, or for the bride even to speak with the relatives of the bridegroom. The two parties are never consulted, and "in this country the youth never make love."

To counteract these difficulties the Mission makes much use of the local custom of swearing a common oath in which those swearing it call down all kinds of imprecations on their heads should they be forsworn. Consequent upon the swearing of many such oaths the Mission reports sixty-four marriages celebrated either before or immediately after cohabitation. P. Bonaventura triumphantly states that thirteen married by him are still with their husbands; but of those

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married by P. Francesco one ran away six weeks ago and cannot be found.

When I was there in 1908 things were better, but old customs clung. The main idea of the clergy was to insist that a betrothal must not be broken off, but to prohibit child betrothals.

All priests were ordered to question the girl as to her wishes before celebrating the marriage. Few girls, however, have the courage to resist the commands of the house and the usage of the tribe. Among the wilder tribes girls who objected were still sometimes carried off bound with cords and forced to comply; and, cohabitation having taken place, the priest married them.

Among the Dukagini tribes infant betrothal was still common. The fine old bairaktar of Nikaj, Bash Bairimi, told me that he thanked God he owed no one blood; all his five sons were alive and four were married. The fifth, aged twenty-five, was yet unmarried. Not because Bash grudged the money. He would pay willingly, but could find no maiden good enough. He wanted good blood. A woman of bad stock makes endless trouble. He had betrothed the four elder lads to unborn brides; but had not done this with the fifth and was sorry, for all good maidens were already betrothed. He was looking out for a suitable widow. Money, he repeated, was no object; he would not stick at a few more napoleons to buy a really suitable woman.

A result of high bride-price and shortage of women was a good deal of woman-stealing between the outlying tribes. I was told that many of the blood-feuds of Shala were based upon the abduction of girls from neighbour tribes. If a betrothed girl went off with another man, willingly or unwillingly, a blood-feud always started. She was the property of the family that had bought her and had no rights over her person.

*Escape from Betrothal.*—In one way only could a girl evade a marriage she disliked. If she could find twelve elders of her tribe group to act as con-jurors she could swear perpetual virginity. If she broke the vow the honour of the con-jurors was blackened and a blood-feud ensued. It was not easy for her to find twelve con-jurors.

Having succeeded and taken the vow in the church or mosque, her status is, I believe, unique. In the Maltsia e Madhe she can, if she pleases, dress as a man. She associates with the men on equal terms, and eats and smokes with them. She may carry arms. The reason given is that as she has no man to support her she must support herself, and a herdsman's life is the only way. I met altogether four virgins who wore men's clothes, but none carried arms. I heard of three more. One in the Djakova district was said to have served in the Turkish Army undetected.

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Among the Dukagini I met several virgins, but all wore women's dress. As a rule, in all districts, the sworn virgin became servant to one of the priests, and often joined the Third Order of St. Francis. Some became nuns or worked in one of the Scutari nunneries.

In the Malsia e Madhe, in the case of a man with several daughters and no son, by his wish one could swear virginity and act as his son. He could bequeath to her his house and land for her lifetime, after which it reverted to the nearest male heir. Such a virgin had the right to sell her younger sisters. Such an one, aged about forty, I met in the Hoti tribe (Plate VIII).

In the Dukagini tribes, where the virgins do not wear men's dress, they cannot inherit and live on and work the land during their lifetime as in Malsia e Madhe. The land goes to the next male heir, and he must pay the virgin yearly 300 okos of maize, 18 of rakija, and 30 of wine, and she can enforce payment by appeal to the Council of Elders.

One case only did I hear of a virgin breaking her vow. She had been for years servant to the priest of Baitza, and was accounted holy. On his death she was forty, and shocked the country-side by eloping with a Gusinje Moslem. No one dared follow to take vengeance in such a dangerous district, but it was piously hoped that she would pay the price of her crime in hell.

On the way from Berisha to Apripa we passed a huge rock. A virgin, so holy that she was almost a saint, had vowed to carry it to the church at Berisha. She carried it safely a long way. Then in the forest she heard a shepherd fluting, and looked at him and admired him. Straightway she forgot the heavenly things on which she had fixed her mind; she dropped the rock, and when she tried to pick it up again found she had lost her miraculous strength. And there the rock stands.

In spite of many inquiries, I failed to hear of a case of a young man refusing to marry his betrothed bride. People were surprised I should ask and always replied: "But why should he? God has made all women alike." On the other hand, I met some cases of blind fury ending in blood-feud where a father had broken faith and sold his betrothed daughter to someone else. I argued with one man who was "in blood" that it was stupid to want to marry a girl he had never seen and who did not want him—people in other lands would laugh at him. He furiously replied that the girl had been paid for years ago by his father; the return of the bride-price made no difference; she was their property, and he would get her if he had to shoot her husband to do so. His honour and that of his whole house had been blackened. If people in other lands laughed at him it only showed they had no honour.

I asked often why the young men did not choose for themselves,



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and ask the girl. The usual answer was that they were too modest. The suggestion seemed to be thought indecent.

The fact that both in Montenegro and Albania a word of Turkish origin is used commonly for "to make love" (Montenegrin and Bosnian, "ashikovati"; Albanian, "ashik," lover—"ashari," love) suggests that love-making played little or no part in the marriages of both lands. I heard that the son of an Austrian mother and an Albanian father was betrothed and asked his mother if he was much in love. "O dear, no!" she cried. "Not in the least; he is quite Albanian!"

One case only I met in which—perhaps for the first time—a betrothal was broken and the girl left free to marry. She was the niece of Mgr. Premi Dochi, mitred abbot of the Mirdites, a very remarkable man, whose death during the war was an immense loss to Albania.

I passed the night at her father's house. The girl sat sullen and glowering in a corner like a wild cat at bay. No one spoke to her. I asked what was the matter. She had refused to be sent to her betrothed. Her father was furious. Only the abbot's intervention had saved her. He talked the young man into admitting that it was useless to marry a girl who hated him and would probably run away, when another more amenable could be found, and got him to swear that no blood-vengeance should be taken if the girl married another. But the father, enraged, declared often and loudly, "A girl marries to please her house and not for herself"; and rated her till I was sorry I had asked. Awe of the abbot alone had made him yield.

*Marriage Ceremonies.*—When the wedding-day is fixed the male relatives of the bridegroom go to fetch the bride. The bridegroom usually does not go. As the tribes are exogamous the distance may be considerable. Sometimes the men of the bride's family take her to a spot half-way and hand her over there. Sometimes she is fetched from her father's house. Moslem girls are always accompanied by one or two female relatives. Christian girls usually are, if the journey is a long one; but not always. In no case does the mother go.

Marriage among the Christians is according to the rites of the Catholic Church.

I was never at a mountain wedding, but was told some local ceremonies. In Klementi the bride, on coming to her husband's home, must throw an apple over the roof, and is given some corn. This recalls the *confarreatio* of the Romans. She is then led three times round the hearth. All through the mountains I gathered that a bride must enter the house with her right foot first and carry in a male child with her. On marriage the hair of the woman is dyed black and dressed differently from that of a virgin. There are various modes, according to district. In the Maltsia e Madhe the head is shaved in front and over the temples,



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and a fringe is made of hair combed forward over the shaven area. The shaven temple makes the face look very wide.

In order to promote fertility, among the Dukagini it was not uncommon to keep a pair of goats or sheep penned in the corner of the living-room, even when it was at the top of a tall tower and some twenty people lived in it.

On marriage, no kind of privacy is observed. Bride and bridegroom take their place in the common apartment.

A colossal feast is usual at a wedding, and in the old days it might last several days. A Djakovan friend told me that three oxen, fifteen sheep, and God knows how many fowls had been eaten at his. At all weddings any amount of firing takes place. The tribesman goes on shooting so long as he has a cartridge left, for sheer joy of the "pop-bang." One man I knew fired his whole stock of six hundred cartridges.

*Weddings in the Towns.*—In Scutari I was guest at two Catholic weddings. The bridegroom saw the bride for the first time in church. She was brought in closely veiled and unveiled only before the altar. Weddings were always on a Monday or Saturday—usually a Monday. "It would be most inconvenient to marry on any other day," was the sole explanation findable.

This is what took place: The marriage had been arranged by the relatives on each side after long conferences. On Sunday afternoon I was invited to the bridegroom's house to see the "gifts." No bride-price in money is paid. Four Scutari ladies in full dress sat on the floor at one end of the room and three men at the other, in charge of the "gifts." These were always the same, and varied only in quality according to the bridegroom's means. The "gifts" were a pair of boots, a pair of slippers, and four boxes of scented soap (or perfume), which were in charge of the men. The ladies watched over a large red silk handkerchief, a pair of white cotton stockings (with pink suspenders sewn on a card, a greatly admired novelty), a pair of scissors, needles and pins in a casket, a distaff to make her a good housewife, and a handsome necklace of large silver-gilt coins, set in filigree. This is called the "dupa." It is worn by all married women, and is sometimes of gold and very valuable. No doubt it represents the bride-price.

The boots had high gilt heels, yellow uppers, pink elastic sides, and patent-leather toes, embroidered minutely with wreaths of flowers. They were filled with sweetly scented flowers, that the bride's path on earth might be sweet. We admired the gifts and awaited the arrival of the relative who was to take them to the bride. He arrived with several others; and they dragged from another room the bridegroom, who resisted strongly because "he was so shy." Bride and bridegroom have to assume a superhuman modesty.

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The presents were tied up in two gaily coloured handkerchiefs. We went into the yard. The ladies joined hands and so did the men, and stood in opposite rows singing alternate verses. The men asked if the bride was ready, and the ladies sang she was a lump of sugar. The youth who was acting as gift-carrier was then sprinkled with holy water by the mistress of the house, and went on his errand. All was over for that day. On Monday, at 9 a.m., we were called to the bridegroom's house. A large party of male relatives and friends was gathered there, with a violin, tambouritza, and concertina. The bridegroom and his two witnesses sat in the yard on chairs. I went to the women's room. The display was gorgeous. On full-dress occasions the Scutarene Catholic ladies' dress touches the sublime. The exquisite fineness of the embroidered white silk veils, the skill with which they were draped; the coral and gold stitched "salman" which gleamed through the veil and stood in a peak over the forehead; the long tassels of seed-pearls or filigree gold that hung from the ears; the lavish display on neck and breast of great gold coins, and the great scarlet cloaks made up a scene of real magnificence. Each lady sat, a vast heap, on the floor, her huge purple-black "branaveks" (bloomers) billowing round her and the skirts of her scarlet stiffly embroidered "djuba" spreading like a peacock's tail behind her, with all the solemn dignity of an Eastern idol. Coffee and piles of sweets circulated. An empty chair in the corner awaited the bride. Then an ox-cart creaked down the lane. The oxen were decked with marigolds. They brought the bride's coffer. We went to meet it. The women joined hands and sang a song of greeting, while with difficulty ten men carried the huge painted chest into the women's room. It contained all the bride's clothing; all her husband's under-clothing (she has to make him at least two dozen of everything); and all the house-linen (likewise her work). Two of the bridegroom's female relatives now went in a gaily decorated carriage to fetch the bride. The horses' heads were beflagged with the coloured handkerchiefs which play a large part in the life of the people. The ladies took with them a parasol for the bride and the scarlet cloak ("japangi"), which is the gift always of the bridegroom to the bride, and is worn by married women only. The bride was to be conveyed to the cathedral.

The bridegroom then entered the women's room to say farewell. He wept real tears and was dragged away weeping and resisting, the ladies sprinkling him with holy water as he left. After a long wait, punctuated with coffee, sweets, and rakia, a cry arose: "They are coming!" In the carriage were the two female bride-leaders, neither of whom may be the mother. A sister, aunt, or sister-in-law may take the duty. Between them sat the bride motionless, rigid, and closely veiled; and opposite sat a little boy whose presence is necessary to

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enable her to bear male children. The ladies again sang songs of greeting. Then the two bride-leaders manipulated the bride as though she were a lay figure. She was absolutely passive. They raised her to her feet, set her feet one after the other, shod in the wedding-boots, on to the steps of the carriage, and then on the ground. They then draped her with the red silk handkerchief sent her yesterday, and pinned it to the top of her head. Supported under the armpits she was slowly shuffled across the yard. It was but a few yards long, but her passage took full ten minutes. She was pelted with sweets, which a crowd of children gathered, and sprinkled with holy water, and led into the women's room. The bridegroom then arrived on foot and went to the men's room. I followed the bride. She was led backwards, and seated, still blinded by the veils, upon the chair in the corner. Her hands were laid on her sash and nervously grasped a folded handkerchief. Her immobility as her attendants handled her was so inhuman as to be almost horrible. One of her leaders carefully lifted a corner of her head-coverings and gave her lemonade to drink under it. The attendants themselves were then ceremoniously served with refreshments. They then removed her wedding-boots and put on the slippers, raised her to her feet, lifted a corner of her veil, said good-bye under it, and withdrew. The poor bride still stirred never a finger, but the violent heaving of her breast showed her on the verge of hysterics. She pulled herself together and the ordeal continued. One of the bridegroom's female relatives unpinning the red handkerchief from the bride's head and held it as a screen before her. Behind it her headdress was changed. Her white veil was removed, and a yellow beflowered silk one substituted.

The great moment had now come. We were to see her face. A lady on each side of her threw back the veil and showed her off. She was exposed to a crowd of staring females. Her head dropped modestly. Her attendants each placed a finger under her chin and raised it again. The sweat streamed down her face. They wiped it. They straightened her wide coat, settled her sash, and waved the flies off her. Such was her Spartan heroism that when a fly, unobserved by the attendants, crawled up her face, she did not even by a twitch show that she was alive. Then a front row of chairs was arranged and all the men came in. The bridegroom, witnesses, and father took their seats. The background was crowded with miscellaneous youths. They stared with all their eyes at the luckless girl, who in vain dropped or turned her head, only to have it put straight again.

Only the bridegroom held his head down and would not look. His witnesses grasped his chin and made him look, and he faltered, "But I've seen her already."

The wedding song then began:—



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How beautiful is the bride, Mashallah, Mashallah.

She has a forehead for a "perishan" (gold ornament of coins, etc.).

Her eyebrows are like braid, Mashallah, etc.

Her eyes large as coffee cups, Mashallah, etc.

Her nose is like a gold coin ("muskala").

Her cheeks like sweet cake ("gurabi," given at night by the bride to the bridegroom).

Her mouth is like a casket, Mashallah, etc.

Her teeth like pearls.

Her neck like a lily. Her figure is like a standard

sang the ladies, the men roaring: "She is, she is!" in a high falsetto, pressing their hands on their ears, and the small boys yelling "Mashallah," a strange cry at a Catholic wedding. All the time her two attendants patted, straightened, and wiped the bride. My neighbour whispered to me: "They often faint." I anxiously watched her panting and swaying, and was relieved when the bridegroom left the room and the men followed. The ladies then bent the bride's knees and she plopped on to the chair. By now she was almost hypnotized, and mechanically at intervals tried to rise, but was at once replaced unless a child came in, when it was correct for her to rise for a moment. Then came midday and the wedding dinner, to which I did not stay. The bride is allowed to withdraw for a time. She does not eat with the guests. Her attendants put little bits of food into her mouth. If very modest she does not take it, but when left alone secretly consumes some food she has hidden in her marriage coffer. On my return she was again enthroned. I was given three tumblers of wine and a dish of sweets and told to consume them, and did my best. I was then given a special view of all the bride's ornaments, and invited to return at night for the final ceremony. This I did not do. It was described as follows: The two attendants prepare the bed at midnight. They undress the bride and put a long silk shirt on her; lay her forcibly on the bed, and withdraw. The two male witnesses then lead or drag in the bridegroom and prepare him. The wedding guests all stand outside the door when the couple are left alone, and sing epithalamia of an encouraging nature and shout advice through the keyhole. The bride has to feed the bridegroom with the "gurabi" (cake) she has brought in her wedding coffer.

The company sings continually till told the marriage has been consummated. In a short time the bride and bridegroom emerge completely redressed. She wears a married woman's dress. They are greeted as man and wife and at last left in peace.

The whole of the next week the bride may be visited at any hour of the day and must not speak a word, but sit rigid as before.

At the end of the week she has a holiday and goes back to her own people on the Sunday. On the Wednesday her husband is invited to



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make acquaintance with the family into which he has married. Again the party is divided into "buck-herds and doe-herds." The husband enters the ladies' room and embraces all of his new female relations, except his wife, whom modesty compels to turn away. He sups with the family and goes home alone. Next day the bride is brought back to his house and the same pantomime of extreme reluctance is gone through. She comes home usually in a carriage. I was told that formerly it was etiquette for her to come on foot, but only inch by inch, so that her return from a house round the corner might perhaps take hours. She visits her family thus at week-ends for several months, but only on the first occasion is a carriage and ceremony necessary.

A bridegroom, while I was in Scutari, revolted against the midnight ceremony, and turned all the guests out of his house after the feast. In spite of her assumed modesty the bride was deeply hurt at being thus deprived of publicity. She complained to her parents, who angrily asked why their daughter should have been thus insulted. Was she not good enough to show as his wife to his friends in the usual manner? Nor could they see that in this case the bridegroom's modesty had been real and not assumed.

He was in the unusual position of having a house of his own. In most cases the young couple lives in the house of the bridegroom's parents in the town and has a separate room. The parents rule and control the household, and the bride is often very hard-worked. The emigrants returned from America have brought new ideas and the system is breaking down.

Much of the above ceremony resembles Roman practice. The distaff, the casket of household implements, the throwing of sweets, sprinkling of water, epithalamia, the *patria potestas* also.

The girls of a family must be married according to age—the eldest first, and so on. The origin of this is perhaps that formerly infant betrothals were almost universal and girls were sent to their husbands so soon as old enough.

In Scutari, and, I believe, in the other towns, the daughters, or at least one of them, must be married before the sons can be married. The explanation offered was that the daughters must be dowered, and the sons cannot marry till they have helped earn the dowries. Over these wedding outfits the parties are very exacting. The bridegroom's family bargains for every stitch of the garments and stipulates as to their quality. While I was in Scutari a betrothed man, who had always worn Albanian costume, went to work abroad and dressed *à la Franga*. He wrote home to say he now required drawers that could be worn under trousers, and his fiancée, who had already finished I forget how many dozen voluminous Albanian garments, had all her

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work to do again. No one thought it unreasonable, and the wedding was postponed till she had finished. I created great horror by saying it would be better to find another man to fit the already made garments.

All the gifts exchanged are keenly scrutinized, and the respective families argue as to whether they have been properly treated.

*Forbidden Degrees.*—Among the Catholics, of course, the usual laws have to be observed. But the people maintain far more rigid ones of their own. As we have shown in the chapter on tribes, no couple tracing origin from the same male ancestor, no matter how remote, is marriageable in North Albania, whether they be Christian or Moslem. Neither are those related by “hair-cutting” or by “sworn brotherhood” marriageable.

Priests cannot refuse to marry such if there be no other impediment, but I was assured it was very rarely they were asked to do so. Though I made many inquiries, I heard of but one case of a priest being asked to marry a couple with a remote common ancestor. Being an Albanian tribesman, he thought it very repulsive, but as the pair had cohabited, he consented; nor by Church law could he have refused. The bridegroom was shot soon afterwards by the outraged relatives.

### 3. THE LEVIRATE

On one point the tribesman came into severe collision with the Church. He considered it his bounden duty to marry the widow, not only of his brother, but of any male of the house, except his father. In Malsia e Madhe this custom had died out, and blood-feud arose between Hoti and Kastrati because a case had occurred, and the Hoti considered their honour blackened. But among the Catholic Dukagini the custom, in spite of most strenuous efforts of the Church, was still common. Among the Moslem tribes and among the Moslems of Scutari I was assured it was almost universal.

From the tribesman's point of view the position was this: A widow left with young children must remain in the family house and rear them. If they are daughters, she can be returned to her own people when they are old enough not to need her. If there is a son, she has the right to live in the house permanently, but she cannot marry outside the house, as no strange man can be brought into it. It would be cruel to condemn a young woman to celibacy; it would not be honourable. Therefore, even though her brothers-in-law were already married by the rites of the Church, one or other of them must take her as wife. The priest in vain called it concubinage. The man said she was his legal wife and his legal wife agreed with the arrangement.

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Sometimes the brother-in-law was unmarried, but this did not help matters, such marriages being prohibited by the Church. To stop the practice it was usual to excommunicate not only the couple but the whole "house" which permitted it, until the "levirate wife" was dismissed. I visited, at Apripa Gurit, a house of eighteen people thus under the ban. The son, a fine young fellow, had taken his elder brother's young widow to wife one month after her husband's death: this by tribe rule is the correct time. She had been married a very short time to her first husband and had not yet borne a child. The whole household was very uneasy about the excommunication, and offered the priest in my presence first thirty and then fifty guldens and pictures and candles for the church. But they stubbornly refused to put a stop to the "levirate marriage"; it would not be honourable. The young man himself was very certain of this. It was a duty he owed to his brother, and, no matter what the consequences, he would do it. He said they had found a girl, and arranged that he should marry her in a year's time. Till then he must cohabit with his sister-in-law. This he assured me very earnestly.

At Thethi Shala I found a case of a man who had thus taken his uncle's widow and his brother's widow. He then proposed taking a legitimate wife as well and had paid most of the purchase money. Only then did the bride's parents learn of the two other "wives." They said he should not have their daughter till the other two were dismissed. He replied she was paid for, and was his property and threatened vengeance.

The parents appealed to the padre, who sheltered them and the girl at the church-house, and succeeded in arranging a marriage for her with a man at a safe distance. The parents returned the first purchase money. "The aunt and sister-in-law" arrangement continued. The padre at Thethi had routed out all polygamous arrangements in his parish but two.

He said that the people had a deep-rooted belief that it was right thus to take as wife the widow of uncle, cousin, or brother if she continued to live in the communal house. If this was not permitted she must be sent home to her people. They could see no alternative, and pleaded: "It is our old custom. Do not interfere with it."

In the wild and distant tribes of Nikaj, Toplana, and Berisha the custom was extremely common among the Christians. Thus at Nikaj, out of three hundred houses about fifty had sister-in-law concubinage, and other houses similarly kept aunts, so a large proportion of the children were illegitimate in the eyes of the Church, but not of the people. The legitimate wives were very apt to bolt with another man, and there was much blood-feud. In Berisha I was told that the sister-in-



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law was taken to wife more often than not. To remonstrances the reply was, "She belongs to us," and it was pointed out it was the only way to get a wife without paying for her.

In these districts, if the widow is sold, the bride-price is shared by her husband's family and her father's.

A man at Nikaj came to see me who was excommunicate for having two wives—a legitimate wife and the widow of his cousin. He told me he could not possibly put her away because it would be a disgrace to do so. She must stay in the house because she had young children to bring up, and so long as she is in the house he must cohabit with her, for she cannot have another husband. He was unhappy about the excommunication—but one must do one's duty and take the risk.

It is perhaps noteworthy that in the districts where this custom is firmly rooted there are no Slavonic place-names and no appearance of any Slavonic blood. The people are all in stature shorter and smaller built than the Maltsia e Madhe people. They are almost all dark-eyed—dark-brown to hazel—and dark-haired. The skull is short, but is round at the back and has not the characteristic flat back of the folk farther north. The hair grows very low on the forehead, especially on the temples, where sometimes it almost unites by a thin line of hair with the outer end of the eyebrow. The eyebrows often nearly meet in the middle. The nose is short and straight. The moustache is sparse and straggly. The beard, such as is seen after a fortnight without shaving, often sparse or patchy.

The custom of the levirate may therefore belong to the small, dark, pre-Slavonic people.

The purpose of the levirate in other lands is often said to be to raise up children who are to rank as those of the deceased. Though this may have been the reason in the above-mentioned case of the man who took the very recently married widow of his brother, in the great majority of cases in Albania it is not so; for the widow with sons is the one who has the right to remain, and in fact must remain, in the family house; and therefore it is she who is most frequently the levirate wife. In this matter Albanian custom seems to differ from that in other lands where the levirate is practised.

### 4. RIGHTS OF HUSBAND OVER WIFE

No one may beat a woman but her father or her husband. In the mountains a husband had the right to beat his wife if he told her three times to do, or not to do, a thing, and she disobeyed each time. If he orders her not to reply and she does so he may beat her. Even some



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of the padres, being Albanian mountain men themselves, thought this right, though they admitted that the beating was sometimes cruelly severe.

In some ways the women have more freedom than among the Montenegrins, for they are permitted to give their opinion freely on important subjects, and it is often asked, and they join in general conversation. Nor do their husbands ever apologize for their existence.

In Montenegro, on the other hand, as often as not the master of the house has shouted: "Be quiet, woman," when his wife only wanted to ask some innocent question. I never heard any of Iké's views except when Krsto was out, and one was always hearing, "Long hair, short wits, a woman's head!" hurled at the women. The Albanian woman, on the other hand, would joke and chaff the men; would even, in the streets of Scutari, call their husbands out of the drink-shop and tell them they had had enough. Nor does the Albanian woman have to bow humbly and kiss the hand of every male visitor as does the Montenegrin peasant woman. Among the Dukagini I found the men would even fetch water—a thing no Montenegrin "junak" would condescend to do.

A curious case illustrating the rights of the husband occurred while I was in Albania. A mountain woman left her husband and came to Scutari, where she lived by prostitution among the Turkish garrison. The husband's honour was blackened, but if he killed his wife he would owe blood to her family. He therefore consulted her brother, her nearest surviving male relative. The brother agreed that his family, too, was blackened, and gave the man the cartridge wherewith to shoot her. Shot she was, and public opinion considered the husband had acted rightly and cleaned the honour of both families. I said that in such a case divorce should be permitted, but was told that so long as she was alive the family honour would still be black; a divorce would be useless.

### 5. MARRIAGE CUSTOMS IN MONTENEGRO

In Montenegro, and all through the Serb-speaking lands, marriages were arranged by the head of the house. The young people were rarely consulted. A century ago in Montenegro infant and child betrothals were not uncommon, and the young couple did not see each other before marriage. Old Serbian ballads show that exogamy was the rule, for the hero, we are usually told, "sought his bride from afar." Such marriages were designed to strengthen the "house." We find in ballads and tales the youth who laments to his father that no wife has yet been found for him; to whom his father replies: "I have long sought

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for one, but where I find a maiden for thee, I do not find a friend for myself; and where I find a friend, I find no maiden."

When the father found a suitable "friend" (i.e. ally), the son had to accept the arrangement. Till well into the nineteenth century boys were commonly married at sixteen and girls as young as thirteen. I knew a monk who said he was only fourteen years younger than his mother. As in Albania, this system was the cause of the bulk of the old blood-feuds.

In Montenegro, when I was there, young people were beginning to have some freedom of choice. Child-betrothal was extinct, and the marriage age for girls raised to sixteen. The economic conditions tended to defer marriage. The suppression of the blood-feud made it no longer so dangerous to seduce a man's daughter, and throughout Serbia, Bosnia, and Montenegro there was much immorality. Especially in Montenegro was there a great superfluity of women, as a large amount of the young male population was in America.

In truth the "chastity" of the Montenegrin, as sung by Tennyson (who knew nothing of the country), consisted of old in the fact that he was given a wife when very young, and that he and any of his male relatives were liable to be shot if he tampered with any other woman. The betrothed girl, when handed over by her parents, had to be *intacta virgo*, and they were held responsible. Hence any lapse on the girl's part was punished with hideous brutality by her family. Tribe law forbade the entry of any outsider into the tribe. The illegitimate child of an outsider was of its father's blood, and the tribe would not have it. The girl, moreover, being already betrothed, was the property of her betrothed's family, and they would refuse to take "damaged goods," demand compensation, and a blood-feud might follow. Tales were told of hapless girls being hunted out and left to starve; of being stripped and tied naked to a tree on the mountain; of being stoned or beaten, and of the child, when born, being thrown to the pigs (I heard of one such case). Let us hope these were the exception and not the rule.

Up till well into the nineteenth century, in Montenegro a wedding had to be approved not only by the respective fathers, but by their bratstvos. The match being decided, the betrothal ("vjeridba") took place. The bridegroom's father prepared a bottle of rakia with an apple (or orange) on the top, in which a gold coin was stuck. The men of both bratstvos met before the church in presence of the pope. The bride's father brought a bottle of rakia and a bunch of flowers. He accepted the "golden apple" in exchange for the flowers and health-drinking took place. The betrothal was then an accepted fact. The next step was the giving of the ring ("prstenovanje") and exchanging of gifts. The bridegroom took no part. Again his father and two male relatives

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went. They took with them rakia, the ring, an apple with a coin in it, a bunch of sweet basil, and sometimes a piece of linen for a shirt. The bride was brought in and had to look modestly on the ground and bow to the guests. The ring was given to her father, who put it on her finger. She was given the apple and gifts. Gifts were sometimes given to the other women of the house. The maiden withdrew, and the wedding-day and the number of "svatovi" (men who come to fetch the bride) was discussed. Each svat must receive a gift from the bride's family (fancy knitted socks, embroidered shirts, etc.). In old days often a small army went—a hundred or more men. In recent days twenty-five or even less was usual, to avoid the ruinous expense in food and gifts.

On the appointed day the svatovi started. The elder svat and the standard-bearer, the sponsor ("kum"), and the two bride-leaders ("djeveri") were leaders of the party. The djeveri were the bridegroom's brother and a cousin or uncle. They went off singing and firing guns. The djeveri carried rakia and gave drinks to passers-by. At the bride's house a great feast took place.

Strict etiquette as to precedence, seat at table, etc., was observed, and regulation healths drunk. The Stari Svat put a large flat loaf ("pogatch") on the table. The headman of the bride's house then asked that the bread should be gilded. The Stari Svat asked: "But what do I owe you?" The bride's elder replied: "We have given you a beautiful girl and you must gild the bread." The Stari Svat then asked: "But have we then to buy her?" and the bride's elder replied: "No; we do not sell her, but by our old custom you must gild the bread." The Stari Svat then poured coins on the bread, and the loaf thus "gilded" was given to the bride's father. He was supposed to take some payment for the expenses of the gifts, etc., and to return the rest. The ceremony is obviously a reminiscence of the bride-price. The bride's elder then broke the loaf on his head, and the party set to work on the roast meats.

Then the two djeveri went into the room where the bride was and gave her a new pair of sandals ("opanke"), which she put on. The women of the house veiled her face and put a woman's belt on her (leather set with cornelians, or silver filigree). Her hair was plaited in two long tails.

Her brother had to stand guard over her all the time to see that no one tied knots in her fringed "strukka" and thus prevented her child-bearing. The djeveri came to fetch her, and the brother asked for something in exchange and was given some trifle—often a cartridge.

The djeveri took her by each arm, and after this no relation of hers might touch her. As she left she was on no account to look backwards. If she did so her sons would be like her brothers. I was assured that this was very often the case. She was then taken off by this army of



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strange men. With a view to sparing her inconvenience if the journey was one or two days, I was told she was fed on hard eggs previous to starting in order to produce constipation. If there was a halt at night, she slept between the two djeveri. I met an unlucky English journalist who thought it would be great fun to act as djever at a Montenegrin wedding, and was highly embarrassed when he found what was expected of him. "And the beast of a girl snored like a pig!" was his account.

On arriving at the bridegroom's house the whole party went straight to the church as a rule. No woman except the bride was present. The usual Orthodox ceremony was performed. The djevers escorted the bride from the church to her new home. The bridegroom rushed home with the svatovi and was ready to receive her. The mother-in-law received her at the doorway holding a male child. The bride carried the child into the house and made him a present. It was usual to spread a carpet or skin rug at the doorway and hide weapons under it, as by stepping on the weapons she was the more likely to bear a warrior. Then feasting began. In old times it lasted three days. The bride sat apart with the djeveri. She bowed humbly to her new relatives and kissed their hands, but did not converse. She slept at night fully clothed between the two djeveri so long as the feast-days continued. She had to rise early and fetch water from the well to wash their hands and faces (all that requires washing, that is) and those of the svatovi. They rewarded her by dropping small coins in the bowl.

When the feast-days were over the bride slept with her mother-in-law ("svekrva"), who taught her how to address all her new relatives.

The custom of sleeping with the djeveri after the marriage ceremony was extinct when I was in Montenegro, as the marriage feasts had been recently restricted to one day. It needs explanation, and suggests a reminiscence of earlier days when brothers shared a wife in the communal bratstvo. There is no historic record of such a state of things; but some old usage must lie behind so unusual a custom.

The custom of the bride sleeping with her mother-in-law still was in force. It was, in fact, considered honourable to defer the consummation of the marriage; the longer the more honourable. I was assured that it was even sometimes deferred for a year or more. In a large number of the peasant houses there is no privacy. Several couples and a lot of children all sleep in one room. The bride was coarsely joked for being "stidna" (modest). This was the explanation offered for her sleeping with the mother-in-law. About a week after marriage the bride's brothers or her brother and uncle and her mother bring her marriage coffer. The mother brings gifts for the women of the house, and during her visit sleeps with her daughter. When the visitors



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leave they are given return gifts, such as a ham, some bread, or a bottle of rakia. Within the year the bride visits her parents for a few days.

The complete lack of any sense of what we think decency was shown at the wedding of one of Krsto's bratstvo. The man had just returned after two years' work in the United States and brought home about £200 in gold, so was thought a millionaire. His family at once found him a bride and he spent some £30 on a gold embroidered suit of clothes for himself. He gave gold rings to his brothers and some friends, and the rakia flowed. Knowing that the family hut was little larger than Krsto's, I asked where the couple would live. "In his father's house, of course!" I said it was too small, so was taken to see that, though there were already three bedsteads in it, a fourth could be squeezed in and leave enough floor space. I said, as he was so rich, I wondered he did not build another room. All were horrified at the idea of thus wasting money. An embroidered suit and gold rings one could understand, but an extra room when you could squeeze into what you had got! So a strange young woman was duly brought to Njegushi by a gang of Krsto's male relatives, with much flag-waving, golden apples (oranges), and rakia, and they all pigged in together in the single room.

The bride has to provide a large outfit—a mass of clothes, sheets, towels, stockings, etc., for herself and her husband. In old days she had to spin and weave the material as well as make the garments, and it was a common complaint that girls were no use at home, as scarce out of childhood they had to begin on their trousseau. Even after they had made it they were not sure of it. The daughter of one of the chief schoolmistresses in Cetinje married without her mother's consent (her father was dead). There was nothing against the young man, so far as I could learn. The couple had waited some time before deciding to marry without leave. I went to see the mother just after the marriage, and she told me with fiendish glee that she had sold the whole of the girl's trousseau to a neighbour. It was improper for a girl to choose for herself.

I asked some of the women I knew well about their marriages. Mitar's wife, Krsto's sister-in-law, said she was about sixteen when her parents told her she was going to be married in a week or two. She was extremely pleased. Was she not afraid of going to strangers? Oh, no. She knew both tribe and bratstvo were honourable. She was very eager to go. Her mother-in-law told her who all her new relations were. In fact, the marriage was a happy one.

The "popadija" (pope's wife) was still more emphatic. She, too, had been quite a girl when she heard she was to be married. They were both very young, as a pope cannot be married after he is ordained.

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Boys destined for the priesthood were, therefore, often married when thirteen, but the couple did not live together till he became a full pope. To be wife of a pope, she explained, was the greatest luck; for as he cannot marry again he takes great care of you. To many of these girls it was no more surprising to be told they were to be sent to a strange husband than for an English girl to be told she is going to school next term.

A story to explain why a pope may not marry again was told in Montenegro. When the patriarchs of the Church met to make marriage laws, the men sent a petition that popes should not be allowed to marry, so that there should be plenty of wives left for them. Four women then came and begged that popes should be allowed to marry, so that there should be plenty of husbands. All talked and shouted at once. The patriarchs chose one pope and one man. Then they said: "Now you four women, run away as fast as you can!" And when the women had a good start they let loose the pope and the man and said: "Run after them and catch what you can." Off they went. The man grabbed three women and the pope only one; and so it was decided. No man may marry more than three times, and a pope only once.

Though the wives showed much devotion, often the attitude of the men in these made marriages seemed very hard and unfeeling. The woman chosen for them was too often treated without the smallest consideration. If she broke down under harsh treatment his attitude was that of a man who has had a broken-winded horse palmed off on him. He had the legal right to beat her, and did so if she pleaded she was too tired to fetch another barrel of water. She had no business to be either ill or tired so long as his comforts needed attending to. Not only among the peasants, but among the *intelligentsia* one found this. At Grachanitza, which was then Turkish territory, a young Serbian schoolmaster came to see me, one of the many political agents of the Serbian Government working for the destruction of Turkey. He was depressed and angry, for all Europe was hailing with enthusiasm the new Turkish Constitution; and if this were allowed to succeed, all hopes of making Great Serbia were over. Also his work was now very difficult, for he had no woman to work for him. His wife had recently died in childbirth. He was wearing a black shirt, which, he said, was not so much as mourning as to save the trouble of washing it. I expressed sympathy, and said it was especially sad she had died in childbirth. What of the child? Oh, that was dead, too. A good thing, for it would only have been an extra trouble. When he got the post of schoolmaster his father had found a wife for him. They had spent a lot on the wedding and had expected she would work and make him comfortable. Then when the baby was coming she was always com-

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plaining; and when it was born she was very ill. This he seemed to think outrageous conduct on her part, as she should have been up and at work three days afterwards. The neighbours then told him he must fetch a doctor from the town. He thought this absurd and at first refused. He ought to have continued refusing, for when at last he did fetch a doctor the latter only said that she was dying. So that money was wasted, too. And then he had to pay for the funeral. For the sufferings of the poor girl he had no pity, and, most of all, he grudged the doctor's fee. Now he did not know how to afford another wedding. When he began to abuse both his poor wife and her relatives, I told him he himself had killed her with overwork and neglect. He was angry; but as he was one of those who was educating young Serbia, it was as well that he be shown an outside point of view.

In Serbia the bride-price existed till the beginning of the nineteenth century, when old Karageorge abolished it because it had become so high that many men could not obtain suitable wives.

In Serbia old women often acted as marriage brokers and conveyed information as to who had a marriageable daughter and what she was like, and expected a fee when a marriage was arranged. I met a life-insurance agent who dabbled in this business and was anxious to dispose of me.

The marriage customs of Bosnia and Serbia, though there are local differences, are, in the main, the same as those described for Montenegro. The bride is fetched, after a formal betrothal, by the *svatovi* and *djeveri*.

*Sworn Virgins.*—Among the tribes of Montenegro which are of Albanian origin, it appears that the custom of allowing a girl to swear virginity and assume male rights and attire existed till recently. I heard nothing of it in my time. But Medakovitch describes meeting a girl of the Rovatz tribe in 1855 who had no brothers and “acted as son to her father, wore men's clothes, and carried a gun on her shoulder; smoked tobacco and was always with the men.” He adds that she was bound by a vow.

*The Levirate in Montenegro.*—As to whether the Levirate formerly existed in Montenegro I could get no definite information. I suspect that it did, for I frequently heard that in “the good old times” men often had two wives and that it was allowed. Medakovitch, writing of the 'forties, says that Montenegrins used often to have two wives, “but do not now.” A similar statement is made by Joseph Kerpotitch in 1788 (*v. Vladan Georgevitch, Extracts from Vienna Archives*): “Except that they keep fasts, they have no religion. They rob, steal, have many wives; steal the wife of a weaker man and marry her. Some sell women and girls to the Turks, and commit other unnatural vices



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as one hears daily." Some writers have ascribed this to "Turkish influence." But as the custom of the Levirate was common all through the neighbouring Albanian tribes and many of the Montenegrin tribes are of Albanian stock, it is highly probable that at least some of these extra wives were levirate. The custom of the *djeveri* sleeping with the bride before she is given to the bridegroom suggests that they stand in a peculiar relationship to her. In Albania the widow can be taken by the eldest male relative of her deceased husband—barring his father. In Montenegro the *djeveri* as a rule were the bridegroom's next brother and his uncle. In the old ballads we very frequently find the wife appealing to her *djever* brother-in-law as one whose special duty it is to help and protect her.

Among the oldest ballads in the Karadjitch Collection are two versions of the same theme—the punishment inflicted upon a criminal land by the Virgin Mary and the Saints. In the first version the land is India; in the second it is Syrmia. In both the crimes are similar: "An accursed land where God's religion is not; where they do not pray God's help; where children obey not their parents; where the younger obey not the elders; where *kum* (sponsor) does not keep faith with *kum*; *where the djever works shame to his sister-in-law*; where brother drives brother before the judges and inflicts penalties on him before the Turks; where they do not celebrate the saints, nor burn candles in the churches, nor read God's liturgy." The saints burnt up the land first, and then St. Sava buried it in snow, and finally the population returned to the paths of virtue and were pardoned. This curious tale sounds like a reminiscence of the struggle of the Church against pagan practices. The reference to the sin of the *djever* is noteworthy.

### 6. DIVORCE

In Montenegro, when I was there, divorce was according to the rules of the Orthodox Church, and more easily obtained by men than by women.

But within living memory a local form of divorce had existed. Against this Prince Danilo legislated in 1855 in Law 67: "Divorces between man and wife, so frequent in our land, are forbidden, except in the cases permitted by our Holy Church owing to the faults or impediments of husband or wife."

When neither party to the marriage had any choice in it, it is not surprising that ill-matched couples should have wished to part so soon as possible. Local usage forced them to marry; but local usage permitted divorce. Vladika Petar I is said to have favoured and per-



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mitted it because of the frightful blood-feuds caused by fights over women who fled back to their own families or went off with other men. Parents, having once betrothed a daughter in the cradle to a youth also in the cradle, dared not refuse to carry out the bargain when the time came, even if they knew the boy infant had grown up into a bad lot. The marriage was accomplished, and the daughter encouraged to come home if she could not stand it.

If no signs of pregnancy soon occurred a man demanded divorce. Till Vladika Petar's time a woman could not sue for divorce; but by flying home and refusing cohabitation she could drive her husband to do so. The old formula was that a council of elders, at which the pope presided, having been called, the wrongs of the husband were declared and discussed. If the elders decided in his favour, a cup of wine was offered to the wife's male relatives, who drank of it and offered it to the husband, who refused to drink with them. The pope then gave one corner of the wife's apron to her father, and the other corner to the husband's father. He then drew a cord between them and declared them separated. Thus the parents who made the marriage also unmade it.

Vladika Petar I (1796) decreed that "He who takes a woman whose husband is living or a girl not given to him by her parents or guardians, according to the rites of religion, shall be expelled from our territory and his goods confiscated."

12. "A pope who marries a man and woman when the woman has a living husband, or marries a girl forcibly captured, or a woman not permitted by religion to marry, shall be expelled both from the priesthood and from our land."

He permitted women to sue for divorce and instituted a fine of fifty thalars, which the man who had divorced his wife had to pay to her father. If the woman asked and gained the divorce, her father had to pay fifty thalars to the husband.

If there were any children, the elders usually did not grant a divorce. In case of the wife's adultery the husband obtained divorce at once and paid no damages. He could, if he pleased, cut off his wife's nose, and not infrequently did so.

### ALBANIA

Among the Catholics, as elsewhere, there was no divorce. Such was the severity of the local priesthood that few persons were aware that it was possible to get a marriage annulled.

An unlucky young Scutarene was told by his parents that they had arranged for him to marry a certain girl. He had already said he wished to marry her, for he had known her as a child. During the

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betrothal, as was customary, they were not allowed to meet, and the unfortunate man did not know till the veil was lifted in church that they had betrothed him to the girl's elder sister. He at once said, "I refuse to take her." The assembled relatives hushed him up and said he must not make a disturbance in church. He, thinking his protest was sufficient, allowed the service to finish. So soon as it was over he repudiated the girl, and said if she was taken to his home he should not return there. Nor did he. His parents kept her some time and then sent her to her own home. He returned then; but left when they again sent her round. The affair was some two or three years old. All parties were greatly concerned. But I could not make them believe that Rome, if properly applied to, would certainly declare this to be no marriage.

Among the Moslems the usual form of Mohammedan divorce prevailed.

### 7. MARRIAGE OF AN OUTSIDER INTO A TRIBE

#### MONTENEGRO

*Outsider into the Tribe.*—There was one exception to the rule which forbade any man—an outsider—to become a member of a tribe. If a man had no sons and one or more daughters he could, with the consent of his bratstvo and tribe, import a son-in-law instead of exporting all his daughters.

This man then lived as son of the house and took the place of a son. He lost all rights in his former tribe and was a member of that which he had married into. He dropped his own family name and took that of Domazet ("dom," the house; "zet," son-in-law). His sons were Domazetovitch, a name which can still be found in Montenegro and, I believe, in Bosnia.

But the introduction of a man of another tribe was so much disliked that in marriages of this kind the domazet was, as a rule, chosen if possible from another group within the tribe that was not related by blood. Such groups existed in most of the larger tribes (*v. Tribes*).

#### FORBIDDEN DEGREES

In Montenegro, though the ancient strict rule of exogamy no longer held good as regards tribes according to law, yet in practice there was still a tendency to marry outside the tribe or into a quite distant group of it.

The laws of the Orthodox Church on forbidden degrees were given me by Pope Gjuro as follows:—

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Relationship falls into five classes:—

1. The blood of my family.
2. The blood of my wife's family and that of my brother's wife.
3. The blood of my wife's brother's wife.
4. "Kumstvo" (godfatherhood).
5. Adopted child.

In Class 1 intermarriage of descendants is forbidden till the eighth degree, which is reckoned thus:—

The father counts as 1; his children (brothers and sisters), 2, 3; their children, first-cousins, 4, 5; their children, second-cousins, 6, 7.

The next generation—that is, a man's great-great-grandchildren—are intermarriageable, but Pope Gjuro considered it was not a thing done in nice families.

Class 2. Under some circumstances the marriage of second-cousins may be allowed.

Class 3. The marriage of second-cousins is allowed.

Class 4. A godson ranks as born son, and the rule of Class 1 is strictly observed.

Class 5. As with born son.

In the case of godmotherhood the prohibition does not reach so far, e.g. there are two sisters, of whom one, Leposava, has a godson, Obrad; the other, Vidosava, has a born son, Veselin. Veselin can marry Obrad's sister or Obrad's daughter; but Vidosava's daughter cannot marry Obrad.

"Kumstvo" (godfatherhood) is a most important position. The kum is ranked not merely as a blood relation but as one of the headmen of the family. If any important decision regarding his godchildren has to be taken or any step in the family which might affect the children, he is invariably sent for, and, no matter what he may be doing, it is his duty to go; and it is the duty of the family to entertain him suitably.

Krsto once was absent for several days on kumstvo duty, and grumbled much at having to go. He returned placated, for they had given him bought wine in bottles—none of your home-made stuff—and he felt that he had been properly treated.

The rules of conduct for both godfathers and godmothers were strictly laid down and divine wrath was expected to punish any breach of them. The ballad of the *Sins of George of Smederevo* (Servian Prince under the Turks) tells how George, walking in the fair town of Smederevo with his little son Grgur, laments the failure of crops and general desolation; and the child reminds him that when he was asked to be kum at the marriage of Sibirja Yanko (John Huniades): "O Father, thou madest ready thy white steed and went to Sibirja, and there didst marry Sibirja Yanko to a beauteous maiden. Rich was the



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gift the godmother made the godfather—a shirt all of gold. But the godfather gave the godmother naught but a green apple; and that, in the eyes of God, is a great sin.”

Little Grgur then kindly reminds his father that when Yanko's two sons were born, and he was again summoned as kum, this time to the baptism, “again did the godmother give a rich gift to the godfather—a silken shirt; and the godfather gave naught but a green apple.” Finally, when Yanko died and entrusted his wife and children to the care of the kum, little Grgur—with childish persistence—reminds his father that he again failed in his duty as kum. He stole the treasure, left the two children behind, and carried off their mother to be a servant. “Thou knowest, O George of Smederevo, 'twas a deadly sin before God. Dost thou wonder, O my father, that neither wheat nor wine grow about Smederevo? I am surprised, my Father, that the wild canes do not grow in the middle of the town—so deeply hast thou sinned before God” (Karadjitch, *Narodne Pesme*, vol. vi). The pious child, in his straight talk to his depraved father, gives us a good idea of the duties of kumstvo.

Any marriage within these five forbidden degrees is thought incestuous and very revolting. Poor Pope Gjuro was horrified when told that in England it is not uncommon for two brothers to marry two sisters. He said it was as bad as born brothers and sisters marrying. It was “pogano” (unclean); they should be expelled from the land. A man's wife, he explained, is the sister of all her husband's brothers; therefore her sister is their sister also.

In Church law a brother's and sister's children rank equally as relations. In old days the sister's children were not considered as near relations, said the pope. He also said that in old days “pobratimstvo” (sworn brotherhood) affected the parties concerned only. It did not confer consanguinity on their relations collaterally, but only on their direct descendants. This had been long extinct.

*Ancient Custom.*—Reference should be made to two curious old ballads in the Karadjitch Collection which suggest that in ancient days marriage between brother and sister was not unknown. The hero in each case is “the Serbian Tsar Stefan.” In the first, he and his sister, Roksanda, are orphans. He says: “Come and take me for thy lord, that we may not waste our treasure.” Roksanda objects that the heavens will fall, and makes what she thinks are impossible conditions. The Tsar, however, fulfils them. Roksanda still refuses and bids him build a church and gather together monks, bishops and patriarchs, and take their advice. The Tsar built the church and summoned the ecclesiastics, laid the proposal before them, and offered them a heavy bribe for their consent. The holy men gave it, and hailed Roksanda as Tsaritzta.



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But a young deacon who came with three hundred little boys, his pupils, denounced the Tsar, and cried that God's curse would fall on such a deed. Whereupon the Tsar shut up the deacon and the children in a wooden cage, poured pitch on them, and set fire to them. Next morning a newly built church was seen on the spot with three hundred saints in it—the martyred children. The Tsar thereupon built another cage and set fire to the three hundred monks, twelve holy bishops, and four patriarchs. Next morning he found they had been all burnt up and the ground under them burnt. After this heavenly sign the Tsar dared not marry his sister.

In the second ballad Tsar Stefan sits drinking along with the bishops and patriarchs and lords. They are waited on by his sister, Kandosija, and the provisor, Mijajlo.

When the Tsar had drunk plenty he asked the company to agree: "That I take to wife my sister, Kandosija, that the Imperial person may not be divided and the Imperial treasure not be cast asunder." The gentry bowed and said nothing. Kandosija hid her face behind the provisor. The furious Tsar asks him how he dares thus to hide an Imperial person. "When the day dawns I shall slay Provisor Mijajlo and take my sister to wife!" Kandosija then took the wine jug and continued serving wine until the Tsar's servants had to carry him to bed. In the morning, when the bell rang for church, he had to be supported thither by his servants and seated on his silver throne. After church the Serbian lords came and ate sugar and drank rakia with him. The Tsar then remarked he had been drunk last night and asked what he had said. On being told, he wisely recommended his lords to drink wine, but not to drink too much, and he summoned Mijajlo and gave him Kandosija as wife.

Both these show a tradition of preserving a Royal caste by endogamy—a very different thing from the strict exogamy of the Albanian and Montenegrin tribal system. That it refers to Tsar Dushan, who lived in the first half of the fourteenth century, is impossible. He has been tacked on to tales that must be older than his time. Nor is it now possible to decide with which of the many races who have lived in the Balkans these traditions originated, if indeed the tales are not imported ones.

### 8. DEATH

In Montenegro, when a death takes place, the body must be carefully guarded; for should any animal, especially a cat, leap over it, the deceased will become a vampire. The body is washed and usually dressed in its best clothes.

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For a woman the funeral rites are simple; for a man, especially an important man of the tribe, they are elaborate. In olden days the bratstvo had to feast any and every body who came. Poor families were sometimes ruined by having had to slaughter almost every sheep they possessed in order to honour the dead. Roast meat and rakia were served to hundreds of people. Each strove to outdo the other in the splendour of the funeral feast, till Prince Nikola passed a law limiting funeral ceremonies to one day, and advising that food be only given to relatives from a long distance and not to all comers. The councils of elders decided in many tribes that rakia should not be given on account of the drunken orgies that used to result. The tribe I lived with, Njegushi, made a strict rule that coffee only should be given.

*Mourning.*—I had an exceptional chance of seeing this. During the Russo-Japanese War Montenegro was strongly pro-Russian. Prince Nikola offered to send a detachment of Montenegrins. This was refused, and Montenegrin peasants firmly believed that this was one of the causes of Russia's defeat. Two of Krsto's bratstvo who were in Russia volunteered. One was an engineer in Rozhdezvenski's fleet, but escaped with his life. The other, Stevo, was killed in Manchuria. When the telegram announcing his death came, it was taken to Pope Gjuro, as the only one who could read. He brought it to Krsto and these two arranged matters, for Stevo's father was dead. The poor lad had been buried long ago in Manchuria, but, with the exception of interment, all funeral ceremonies were to be carried out. Stevo's old mother was not to be told of his death, because she would cry and be so exhausted that by the time the ceremonies took place she would be too tired to mourn properly. I was assured that family honour demanded that she should mourn publicly.

Messengers were sent throughout the tribe informing all the other bairaks of Njegushi, and also to Cetinje to summon all Njegushi folk there. All day Iké and the popadija roasted and ground coffee. Stevo's old mother was sent on a visit to a married daughter that she might not see the funeral preparations, made at the hut of Damian, Stevo's elder brother. On the appointed day we went there early in the morning. All the men of Dugi Do descended from the common ancestor, Punosh, marched first in a long line over the snow, all wearing black on their caps. Next came their women in black shawls. I was with them. We met at the church and thence marched to the hut. A man just back from the U.S.A. said to me in strong American: "What do you go to this damn fool business for? I won't take any part in it."

When we were within a hundred yards of the house the death-wail was raised—a terrible rhythmical chant, that echoed over the mountains.

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Some of the men did not even know the name of the deceased and had to ask it before crying—

Lé lé lé s'nama Stevo moji brate!

Lé lé lé s'nama, moj' krilati brate!

(Woe, woe to us, Stevo, O my brother;

Woe, woe to us, my wingèd brother!)

over and over again till we reached the house. The cry is made on a quick breath which soon becomes a shattering sob—a convulsion of the diaphragm. The mourners arrived in a frenzy. I was already just inside the door as one of the family, when the first lot of men dashed in. At the end of the hut was a "trpez" (table), on which lay a dummy of the dead man. Full dress—coat, waistcoat, breeches, gaiters, and boots, padded to the semblance of a corpse and girded with sash and weapons. The cap lay where the head should be. Behind it stood the poor old mother, supported under her armpits by two married daughters. She had been told that very morning. The younger daughter, a very beautiful woman, had ripped her face from forehead to chin with her nails; streaming with blood and sodden with tears, she was an appalling sight. The three women, locked together, swayed slightly as they ceaselessly sang the praises of the dead boy. The songs called "Tuzhenje" or "Tuzhnjava" are "improvised," but usually consist of a number of stock phrases. Then the men hurled themselves in. I knew most of them well, but I was something like terrified. Had I not dashed into the corner they would have trampled me underfoot, I think, without seeing me. Yelling the death-wail, they danced furiously in front of the "trpez," beating their breasts and their temples with their closed fists, thus accompanying the wail with a barbaric drumming. Tears streamed from their eyes and soaked their clothes. They leaped almost a yard from the ground. They almost fought each other in their struggles to throw themselves on the dummy and kiss it.

It was a maniacal howling orgy of grief, stopped suddenly by Pope Gjuro, who was head of the ceremony, crying: "Brethren, you have wailed enough. Make place for others." They reeled from the hut, exhausted. Pope Gjuro handed to each who was far gone a cup of black coffee as stimulant. Among those who had howled the most was the man from U.S.A. Local surroundings had completely broken down his thin coating of "civilization." He gasped, half-ashamed, to me: "I didn't mean to do it!"

Next came the women, and the same ceremony was gone through, except that they did not leap and dance. But they beat their heads and breasts and wailed, wept, and struggled round the dummy, while the three women behind it chanted on, quite dazed and as if unconscious



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of the din. All day long came processions of men and women from every bairak of the tribe, village by village; and long trails of people from Cetinje, a four hours' tramp over the snow. The one touch of comedy in the gruesome day was added by the popadija, who was bitterly opposed to giving coffee only, and cried: "I do not care what the law is. When Pope Gjuro dies I shall bury him with rakia, and if I die first I hope he will do so by me!"

By evening all was over. The poor old woman was brought to Krsto's house more dead than alive. She sank down by the fire and slept heavily. I went to the inn with Krsto, who treated those who had marched four hours from Cetinje and had to march back, to rakia. Most of the mourners were treating themselves. They were in many instances greatly exhausted. An astonishing thing was the mechanical producing of tears by the chant of "Lé lé." Many of the mourners had never seen the lad, but their red waistcoats were dark and soaked with tears, and as they sat in the inn they quarrelled as to which had cried the best. This wailing is called "naritzanje." The cry of "Lé lé lé" is raised also when in pain. I have heard men do so when a painful wound is dressed.

At the funeral of one of the Vukotitches of Kchevo—a chieftain family—the tribe was assembled outside the house in a vast circle and two women, known for their skill in lamenting, were trotting slowly back and forth across the circle. One started from one side, one from the other. One took up the chant as the other ceased. So they sang alternately. When tired two others replaced them. The mourning cry of the women is "Kuka kuka." It recurs again and again in their "tuzhbaritza" (lament), and the cry "Kukkukkuka" resounds so soon as a death takes place. The cuckoo is a bird of mourning and sorrow. A widow is constantly spoken of as a "poor cuckoo." The tradition is that when Lazarus died his sisters, Martha and Mary, vowed they would bewail him the rest of their days. Then Our Lord raised him from the grave and they knew not what to do. To release them from their vow He created the cuckoo and bade it wail for ever.

St. Lazar's Day is the Saturday before Palm Sunday; and it is asserted that the cuckoo is never heard before that day. Some say that the daughters of King Lazar were turned to cuckoos, and for ever lament the death of the nine Jugovitches at Kosovo. Krsto preferred this tale, and it is the one given in that treasure-house of old beliefs, *Gorski Vjenatz*, by Vladika Radé (Petar II):—

On thy life, O Drashko, do not kill a cuckoo!  
Knowest thou not that then, evil will befall thee?  
Knowest thou not they are, the daughters of Tsar Lazar?

*The Interment.*—Especially in the Tzrmnitza valley it was customary



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to tap the bier three times on the doorpost when carrying it out or another death would soon occur. To drop the bier entailed a speedy death in the family. On coming out of the house, a bottle-gourd or pot was broken to prevent another death—a small misfortune to take the place of a large one. The “substitute misfortune” is strongly believed in both in Albania and Montenegro. My guides in both lands always rejoiced if I lamented the loss of a pencil or handkerchief, declaring that now the rest of the journey would be free from danger.

On the way to the graveyard the “*Lé lé*” goes on ceaselessly in the villages; in the towns they were quieter. The women wear black shawls on their heads; the men a piece of black over their caps, and often round one arm. In olden days the women loosened their hair. A large dish of boiled wheat mixed with sugar and wine is carried and offered to all passers-by, who are expected to take and eat a little. At the door of some churches is a stone table on which to place this food-offering. Such are common, too, in Macedonia.

The corpse is always in full dress and is carried in full view. The coffin lid, if there is one, is carried after the bier. An impressive ceremony, when the grave is filled, is that the heads of the *bratstvo* call the dead man loudly three times by name. They await a reply for a minute, and then all together cry, “*S’bogom braté!*” (“Good-bye, brother”), wheel round, and leave. Formerly, I was told, a bottle of wine was usually buried with the body, but the custom was dying out, though not extinct.

Until some sixty or seventy years ago an elaborate ceremony took place at the grave, the details of which I gathered from the older people and from Medakovitch’s book.

All Montenegrin men then wore their heads shaved with the exception of a long plaited pigtail—the *perchin* (*v.* section on Hair). When the body had been laid in the grave, each man of the immediate family of the deceased cut off his *perchin* and flung it in. The married women of the family had purposely arranged their hair in long, hanging plaits; these they cut off and threw in. (No maiden, except those of the actual house of the deceased, was allowed at a funeral.) Apples were thrown in, and the grave covered and filled with earth. Some people reserved their hair and planted it upon the grave-mound in a cleft stick. Then the funeral party marched to the church carrying the “*panhardiya*” (boiled wheat and wine). Arrived at the church they all washed ceremonially and kissed the cross; they then went outside and ate the *panhardiya* and drank *rakia*. Immediately after the interment the pope hastened to the house of the deceased and asperged it with holy water. This latter ceremony, I believe, still takes place. The house having been asperged, the whole funeral party returned and sat down

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to a great feast—the “karatad.” Petar Jovitchevitch (Montenegrin Consul at Scutari, 1912) told me that in his grandmother’s day all a man’s sisters-in-law were compelled by custom to cut off their hair and throw it in his grave. The wife, he said, did not do so. I was told that even to-day it is not thought modest for a wife to lament as do the deceased’s mother, sisters, and sisters-in-law. The latter rank as real sisters, and it is firmly fixed in the mind of the peasant that the sister is a man’s nearest relation. Her first duty, as Antigone said of old, is to her brother. The wife is a mere outsider from another family. So much so was this the case that till recently, when the wife of a Montenegrin peasant was mortally ill, she was not infrequently carried back to die at her parents’ house.

It is clear that this ceremony of cutting off the hair is part of an old purificatory rite. Contact with the dead in very many lands is held to necessitate immediate purification. It was, in truth, the earliest attempt at disinfection, it having been observed that persons in contact with certain corpses had died soon afterwards. In *The Golden Bough* Sir James George Frazer gives many instances of purificatory hair-cutting.

The Montenegrins polled themselves, went to church, and washed before kissing the cross. Hair was cut off only by the near relatives—that is, those who in a communal house would have been in contact with the deceased. We have thus a purificatory rite of great antiquity carried out in South-East Europe till the middle of the nineteenth century.

From the ballads we learn that men in a frenzy of grief would tear out their beards and hair.

Face-clawing, too, must have been general, for Prince Danilo, in his Code of 1865, expressly forbids both this and hair-cutting.—Law 87 (*v.* section on Law).

In my time the entire bratstvo was liable to be fined, and I had to promise solemnly not to reveal to the authorities the fact that poor Stevo’s sister had ripped her face. The fashion of wearing the hair short probably had more to do with ending the custom of men throwing their hair into the grave than had Danilo’s decree, which, as we see, had not succeeded entirely in suppressing face-clawing.

Achilles and the Myrmidones cut off their hair at the funeral of the beloved Patroclus, and at the grave-side this ancient rite has been carried on through nigh two thousand years of Christianity.

Medakovitch states that the perchin of the dead man was cut off and kept with his clothes to be lamented over. The men who had polled their heads were not allowed to shave or cut the hair for six weeks after the funeral. Strict mourning is kept up in Montenegro

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for a year, and lamentations take place at intervals. The terrible death-wails again resound over the mountains.

I never saw hair on a grave in Montenegro except near the Herzegovinian frontier. It is not uncommon in the Herzegovina, and is still offered on graves in Serbia, where teeth, too, are offered—those of the deceased. Some Red Cross workers during the war were horrified by being asked to permit the extraction of the teeth of deceased patients for the purpose of putting them on the grave. I do not understand what purpose is thus supposed to be served.

I have never seen hair offered in Albania.

In the Herzegovina, in many parts of Serbia, and in Montenegro, on its Herzegovinian side only, offerings are very common on graves. Either a young fir-tree, or large branch of a fir-tree, is planted at the head of the grave, and on it are hung strips of rag, bits of bread, oranges, apples, etc.; or a tall post or cross is erected, to which the offerings are tied. In the Brda of Montenegro—that is, its Albanian side—I have never seen an offering.

In Serbia large commemorative meals are eaten or offered upon graves. This is in Serbia proper. I saw nothing of the sort in Macedonia, where *panhardiya* only was eaten.

This Serbian feast is called the “*dacha*.” It takes place forty days after the funeral; then after six months, and then yearly—usually on a Saturday, a Sunday, or a Saint’s Day, I gathered. I was told that it was continued so long as it was likely the body was not yet decayed. This suggests that so long as there is a body it requires food.

I saw the ceremony in Nish (Serbia) on a Saturday in the summer. A strange scene. A crowd of beggars with bowl, bag, and bottle-gourd stood at the graveyard gate. Mourning parties, largely women, were trailing in carrying dishes of rice, hot gulyash, steaming bowls, baskets of fruit, bread, bottles of wine. The graveyard was deep in grass and a tangle of clambering roses. Each family sought the grave it wished to honour. Women taught their children to stick little wax tapers into the grave, and fill a green earthenware pot with incense and light that, too. As the smoke arose they began the wail: “*Kuka kuka mene*,” wringing their hands, beating their breasts, and sang “*tuzh-baritza*,” honouring the dead. The chief singer ended by flinging herself on the grave and kissing the earth and the cross. When the death-songs were concluded they spread a white cloth on the grave and arranged the meal upon it—stew, bread, cheese. The poor sat on the ground for the meal; the rich sat on wooden or stone benches, and many had brought a pope to read prayers by the grave-side. Their meal was served at a table. Some folks made a mere symbolic meal; others ate heartily, and a crowd of hooded crows hovered round to



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snatch the crumbs—a strange scene, which brought forcibly to mind the stone benches in the tombs on the Latin Way at Rome or at Pompeii. Nissa (Nish) was a Roman town, so was Singidunum (Belgrade). Is the feast a Roman legacy? In Montenegro we find it only in the attenuated form of the boiled wheat.

The peasants, in quaint and bizarre garb, did not look out of place at the barbaric festival; but strange beyond words was the sight of a lady in a fashionable pink costume who, attended by a maid carrying a basket, approached a marble tombstone on which, under glass, was the photograph of a gentleman in a frock-coat. She lighted the tapers and censer, and the maid and she spread a clean serviette on the grave, and laid on it a dinner-roll, a plate of cherries, and a bottle of white wine, merely nibbling a cherry or two as symbol.

As the mourners left the graveyard they gave all the food left over to the beggars at the gate, and by means of a tin funnel their bottle-gourds were filled with a mixture of all the wines.

All Souls' Day in the Orthodox Church is moveable. It is called "Zadushnja Subota" (Souls' Saturday), and comes at the beginning of Lent. It was on March 9th (N.S.) when I took part in it at Krsto's. Iké rolled beeswax round thick cotton between the palms of her hands for tapers. Krsto set the "sofra" (low round table) in the centre of the hut and stuck tapers round its edge with lumps of wax. In the middle of the sofras he put bread and a glass of wine, explaining that the bread was because he had no wheat to boil. Then he borrowed a censer from his brother, Pope Gjuro, and censured the whole room and the ikon, lit all the tapers, murmured a prayer, and poured wine on the bread. He always turned to the East to pray. We then went to church.

Only on few occasions did Njegushi ever go to church. But now the church was full. People brought quantities of these home-made tapers and laid them upon a table on which stood a dish of boiled wheat and sugar-plums and a bottle of wine. People brought wine and poured it into the dish. Some brought a tiny glass, some a tumbler full. Some brought boiled wheat and some a loaf of bread. When the first part of the service was over the congregation took all the tapers, bunched them into torches and lighted them. There was blaze and much smoke. The table was lifted into the middle of the church and Pope Gjuro stood near it, facing the "ikonostasis." The head of each family in turn handed him a folded parchment or a little book in which were written the names of all his direct ancestors back to the founder of the bairak. Krsto's went back to Punosh, the ancestor of all Dugi Do. Only recently in any of the books have some women's names been added. Every list was read by the pope and prayed for. It was a long, long business. When the last was finished, wine was poured upon the boiled





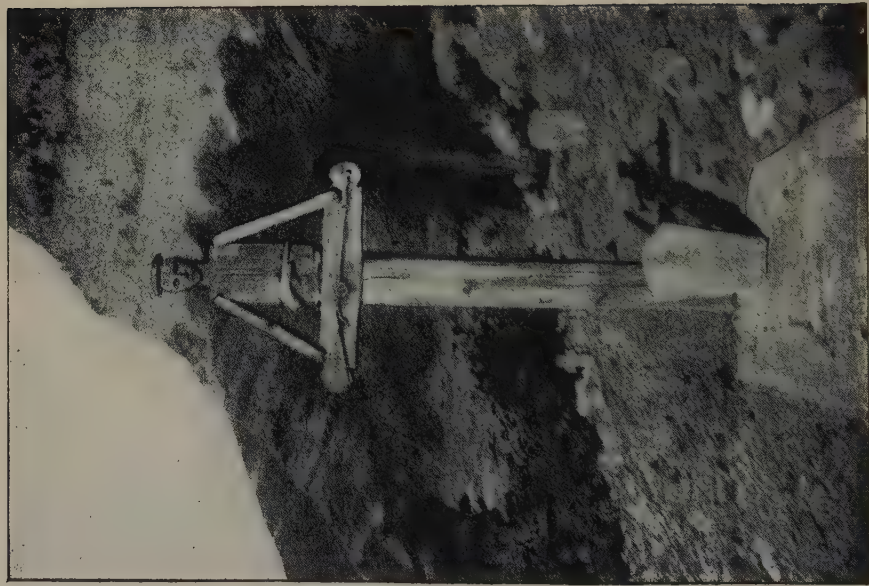


PLATE IX.—ANTHROPOMORPHIC CROSS AT VUKLI



PLATE X.—TOMBSTONE WITH HORSE CARVED ON IT,  
BAITZE KASTRATI

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wheat, and everyone approached and took and ate a handful. Pope Gjuro then cut up the bread and handed a piece to each. It was necessary that the tapers should be completely burnt; and as they became too short to hold they were piled on the floor, and the congregation waited till the bonfire thus made expired.

The meal to feed the ghosts of the departed is thus yet another of the many pagan rites adopted by the Orthodox Church.

Panhardiya is also called "koljivo." I ate it for the soul of Princess Clementine, mother of King Ferdinand of Bulgaria. Krsto, who was a greedy man, liked it extremely and always seized a large handful whenever the opportunity occurred.

In all Balkan funerals that I have seen the coffin is carried open. It is very shallow and the body is visible to all. The lid is carried behind it. The very ornate coffin is often merely ornamental, and the body is buried in a thin wooden shell, not in the coffin.

### 9. DEATH CUSTOMS IN ALBANIA

All through North Albania it is believed that when a man dies his soul comes out of his mouth and walks three times round his body. It then starts upon a journey, and visits each place in which it dwelt during life on earth till it comes to its birthplace. After this it conforms to the creed to which it belongs, and goes to whichever place Christianity or Islam decrees. Some souls are a long time making this journey, as they may even have to go to America. Others, who have never left home except to go to a market town, finish it quickly. I was a long while among the tribesmen before I learnt this. It came out accidentally in referring to a much-travelled man who had just died. When I asked Marko I found he firmly believed it. Why had he not mentioned it before? "Because, lady, I thought you who had been to school knew it. Everyone here knows it. It is our religion." It was, I found, so much a part of "our religion," both Christian and Moslem, that it was taken for granted everyone knew it.

Among the tribesmen it was firmly believed that Christ lives on the top of a very high mountain. "We bad men shall have a terrible fight to get there," said a Dushmani man. He had taken several "bloods." The priest had threatened him with damnation; but with the aid of his trusty rifle he meant to fight his way up.

The gods of Greece dwelt upon Olympus; and Cumont tells us of Mithraism that "an immense mountain towers above moon, sun, and stars and is the dwelling-place of the immortals."

The Albanian tribesman, Christian or Moslem, still places his

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future there. The tribesman loves arguing; nothing pleases him more than to argue with his priest. Where the teaching of the Church conflicts with pre-Christian beliefs the priest is hard put to it. Some fifty or more years ago the Jesuits of Scutari employed a Greek to paint some hideous and horrible pictures of the pains suffered by the damned in hell, and missionaries took them to the mountains. The realism of the crude paintings at first struck awe, and then disgust; and a headman expressed popular opinion: "We are poor men who cannot read or write; but we should never do such terrible things to our enemies, and we do not believe that God would." The pictures made no more tours in the mountains.

The fact that an old belief underlies Christianity is shown by the two words which mean "the soul"—"hi" and "shpirt." "Hi" is not only "soul" but "shadow." Not merely shadow but also "protection"—for "nen hie t'ande," literally "in thy shadow," means "under thy protection."

It is the "hi" which comes out of the mouth and makes the long journey. It is the "hi" which goes out when one dreams and returns again. It is the old pre-Christian soul. "Shpirt" is obviously the Latin "spiritus," introduced along with other terms by the Church—e.g. "lter" or "elter" (altar); "ipeshkevi" (bishop); "kisha" (church—ecclesia).

A very lively Dushmani man argued with the Franciscan who threatened him with punishment after death that when he was dead it did not matter what happened. "But your soul," said the priest, "will not die—what of your soul?" "My soul? When I am dead it can fly where it likes. What does it matter?" He danced about, flapping his arms to illustrate his soul's flight. "Do you know about the Maltzor who was dying?" he asked. "He said to the Blessed Virgin: 'I know I am too bad to go to Paradise, but won't you put me there, just to spite the Devil? It will make him very angry.' " Here the priest stopped the conversation. A Nikaj man who earnestly declared himself to be a Catholic denied any obligation to try to save his soul, saying: "The soul comes from God, so it is God's business to take care of it. Why should God punish my soul for the sins of my body?—my soul has not committed any."

Both Mithraism and Manichæism teach that the soul makes a long journey in which it is purified before reaching Paradise. The Albanian belief in a soul journey may be reminiscent of one or both of these older faiths.

As in other Balkan lands, the corpse must be watched lest a cat leap over it and make it turn vampire.

In all the Catholic districts the burial is according to the rite of the



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Church, and I have never seen food or any other offerings on the graves, but occasionally the broken cradle of a child.

In spite of his differences with his priest the tribesman considers it his right to be buried in the churchyard, and on many occasions when a man has died excommunicate, owing to a blood-feud, and has been buried by order of the priest in unconsecrated ground, his relatives have reinterred him at night in the churchyard and kept watch over him till he has been allowed to rest there. If a boy dies before his head has been shaved he is buried in an extremely shallow grave. After the first shave he has a man's grave, which is breast deep. In the mountains a coffin is rarely used. The grave is roughly lined with slabs of stone or planks, and a piece of plank laid over the face. The body is usually dressed in its best clothes.

The funeral feast in the case of a man is so great that it ruins whole families. Herodotus's account of Thracian funerals holds good to-day in the mountains. "The funerals of their chief men are thus: For three days the deceased is publicly exposed; then, having sacrificed animals of every description and uttered many loud lamentations, they celebrate a feast, and the body is finally either buried or burned."

Some tribes had modified the feast; none had stopped it. Anyone who turned up had the right to be fed; it was the honourable and right thing to do. Sooner than soil his honour and that of the dead man, the head of his house would slaughter almost all the sheep he owned. I arrived accidentally at the feast given by a man for his son. The dead youth, who had been shot, lay there, very beautiful with the strange smile of the dead. All around were the circles of wood-ash and the roasting-spits and the bones of, I think, fourteen sheep which had been devoured. The kinsmen sat grimly by, their temples torn and bleeding. They had cut their nails to sharp points. In Albania it is the men who claw their faces; in Montenegro, so far as I could learn, it was a woman's custom. The death-wails are called "vaitim," and the women who sing them "vaitotse."

When the star of the morning came,  
My brother, O my brother.  
Thou hast put thy gun on thy shoulder,  
And gone forth to thy sheepfold. . . .  
And Vuloja, that dragon,  
Has wedded thee to the black earth,  
My brother, O my brother.  
Thy mother and sister lament for thee,  
And sing the mourning cuckoo song, etc.

They cry that the roof-tree is broken if the head of the house be dead; they call on the dead man and ask how his wife, child, mother, and sister can live without him.

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Green apples are often put into the grave. No one could tell me why. Food for the dead—but why apples and why green?

Among the poorer and remoter tribes only a rough lump of rock marks the grave; but in most graveyards crosses and stones of great interest can be found. A curious phase is the frequent attempt to turn the cross into a figure of the deceased by adding a head and arms. Very good examples were at Vukli (Plate IX).

The best shows a famous warrior armed with rifle and revolver. Up the side was carved a serpent, "to show how fierce he was." Such a serpent is not uncommon on graves, and probably is connected with now-forgotten beliefs, the explanation of "fierceness" being invented to explain the symbol. In Montenegrin ballads it is common to describe a great fighter as "ljuta zmija" (fierce serpent). The dead man's horse figures on some graves (Plate X)—a reminiscence perhaps of the days when the horse was buried with his master. At the funeral of Djeto Soko of Klimenti his horse was present.

On wooden crosses three wooden doves are often perched. Very good examples are at Boga. "Where," says Sir Arthur Evans, "sacred doves occur in their simplest European form, they are usually associated with sepulchral cult. . . . The heathen Lombards ornamented their graveposts with doves. They also occur in prehistoric Cyprus. . . . Birds play an important part in the early cult of trees and pillars. Among primitive races at the present day the spiritual being constantly descends on a tree or stone in the form of a bird." The Catholic Albanian will only say that the doves are "adet" (the custom) or "per bukur" (for beauty), but continues to put the dove on the grave as did, maybe, his prehistoric ancestors. The Moslem does not. His recent ancestors were Christian. He has dropped the doves along with the cross on which they now perch.

*Mohammedan Graves.*—Offerings of coins are seen upon the graves of Bektashi saints in Central and South Albania. I have seen a handful of coins strewn on a grave slab in a desolate spot waiting till the dervish whose business it was should collect them, and was assured by both Christian and Moslem that no one stole them. On some such graves, I was told, lambs are sometimes sacrificed.

The custom of funeral feast, wailing, and face-tearing is common to both Moslem and Christian; otherwise I was told the burial ceremonies of the Moslem tribesmen differed in no way from the usual Moslem ceremonial.

Both Christians and Moslems, I was also told, very commonly put a small coin in the mouth of the deceased to pay his fare to another world.

Briefly, we may say that the funeral rites of the Balkans differ very little from those of Herodotus's day.

*SECTION VI*  
TREES AND FRUITS

1. Forest and Tree Place-names.
2. Of Apples.



## SECTION VI

### TREES AND FRUITS

#### I. FOREST AND TREE PLACE-NAMES

BOTH in South Slavonic and Albanian lands many places take their names from trees and plants. It is hard for us, now that Europe is disforested and the woods which exist are tamed and trained, to realize that in ancient days the forest was an almighty power. It blocked routes; it forced vast torrents of shifting peoples to swerve aside and skirt it; it almost completely separated one group of tribes from another, and is often thus responsible for the many dialects and race differences which torment us to-day.

It was terrible. It harboured wild beast, wolf, bear, wild-cat, lynx, which harried the flocks and the herdsmen; it sheltered even wilder men who preyed on their fellows; and it spread and spread relentlessly, devouring grass land, damming streams with fallen trunks, and making mud-swamps. The little army of men struggled with flint and bronze and fire continually to keep it at bay. They fought the forest—but they could not do without it. Fuel they must have. The Arab in the south may manage with dried dung. In the hard frosts of the north man must have a real fire and plenty of it. From the forest, too, man got his building material, the means of making his rude implements: ploughs, carts, sleds, his tool-handles. An Albanian proverb says: "The forest gave a handle to the axe and the axe felled the forest." The tree-trunk hollowed by fire and axe still forms, in some places, the ferry-boat in the Balkans. All food was cooked, all pottery baked, all metal smelted with a wood fire. Man's life was bound up with the forest; it meant even more to him than do the oil-wells and coal-fields of to-day. You cannot make a boat, nor a sled, of coal or oil; nor hunt game in its depths. No wonder that in early days man looked on trees as things to be propitiated and imagined spirits in sacred groves. Those of us who have ridden for hours through what is left of the Balkan primeval forests—even now almost pathless—know the awe inspired by the silence, the gold green light, and the endless army of mighty grey trunks towering erect from the soil that is muffled and bedded with the dead leafage of a thousand years and echoes no tread. The horse sinks knee-deep. You dismount and plunge through it with difficulty. Only the tapping woodpecker breaks the silence. Gladly you strike

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a marked trail tramped by countless generations, and reach a huddled bunch of charcoal-burners, who squat in huts of bark and branch at the forest's edge, and—save that they have fire-arms and tobacco—live much as did their forbears a thousand years ago.

Till quite recent times the forest has played a great part in Balkan history. What the forest meant in the Middle Ages is vividly told by Albertus, Bishop of Aix, who wrote, "on the word of those who took part in it, an accurate History of the Expedition to Jerusalem from the year 1095 to 1121." We see the inchoate mass of pilgrims who flocked after Peter the Hermit: "Bishops, abbots, clerks, and monks, and after them the noblest of the laity, the Princes, and all the people; the men who were chaste as well as the incestuous; the adulterers, murderers, perjurers, and brigands—in fact, the whole race of men professing the Christian faith and the women, too . . . an army innumerable as are the sands of the sea."

When they reached the Balkans their troubles began. Serbia is not mentioned; Belgrade is in the land of Duke Nicetas, Prince of the Bulgars. On the borders of Hungary the pilgrims are attacked, and after a severe fight they make for Belgrade carrying rich booty.

News of their advance struck terror. "Duke Nicetas removed his treasure from Belgrade, and sent the citizens into the forests and mountains with their flocks, to gain time to call for help to the Emperor at Constantinople to resist the Hermit's armed force."

Peter, alarmed, hastened to transport his troop over the river (? Save). "Numbers of pilgrims tried to cross by making rafts of wood and osier, but while drifting down the river, unable to steer, the Pechenegs, who live in Bulgaria, killed many with arrows." The Bavarians, Allemans, and other Teutons succeeded in capturing several boats full of Pechenegs and drowning them, and the river was at last crossed. Peter then plunged into the vast forests of Bulgaria, and only after "seven days' march through forest did he and his troop arrive at Nissa, a town surrounded with great stone walls. The pilgrims crossed the river on a stone bridge before the town, and occupied an immense plain covered with delicious verdure and pitched their tents along the river. . . . Peter, with foresight, begged leave of Duke Nicetas, Prince of the Bulgars, to buy provisions. The Duke granted leave on condition he should give hostages, for he feared lest this great multitude should be violent. . . . The Pilgrims then were allowed to buy anything, and those who had no money received abundant alms from the townsfolk." Next day Peter started with his great host, but unfortunately "a hundred men of the Allemans, who had a quarrel in the evening over the price of something, stayed behind and set fire to seven mills on the river below the bridge, and burnt also some houses

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outside the town. The townsmen ran with common accord to Duke Nicetas, crying that Peter and his men were false Christians and thieves and not men of peace, for they had killed the Duke's Pechenegs at Belgrade . . . and had further burnt these buildings, unmindful of the kindness so fully shown them. The Duke ordered them to pursue the pilgrims and avenge what they had done. The Comans, many Hungarians, and the Pechenegs, many of whom had gathered for the defence of the town on condition of receiving payment, seized their bows of horn and bone, put on their cuirasses, hoisted their banners on their lances, and rushed in pursuit. The loiterers in the rear were killed and transfixed; the slowly-moving wagons stopped; women, young girls, and boys were captured with all the baggage and flocks, and are captives to this day." When the news reached Peter, he said: "I think nothing better can be done than to return and make peace with the Duke, for our men have behaved unjustly to him." Peter bravely returned, but while he was treating with the Duke a "thousand mad young fellows, filled with great obstinacy," made a fresh attack on the townsmen, who thereupon poured forth from the gates, and with the Duke's cavalry pursued the pilgrims. A terrible slaughter resulted. "The chariot which carried Peter's coffers, filled with an immense amount of gold and silver, was taken to Nissa along with the prisoners and put in the Duke's treasury. They carried off mothers and children and women, married and unmarried, in unknown numbers. Peter and all who could escape dispersed into the dark forests, flying like sheep before the wolves"; and when, after much suffering, Peter managed to gather together the survivors of his expedition, it was found that ten thousand were lost or had perished.

No better picture could be found of the Balkans in the eleventh century: the dense forests, wild mountains, and cultivated oases. The easily burnt mills and houses were obviously of wood and wattle, as can be found to-day. The town of Nissa had stone walls, and the bridge is mentioned as stone, which suggests that other bridges were of wood, and other villages were surrounded with thorn and wattle palisades ("palankas") such as I saw near Grachanitzza in 1908. The mercenary troops are Scythian and Mongol horsemen, armed with bow and arrow. The population is evidently pastoral, and its main idea, on approach of an enemy, is to save the flocks.

The Picensi (Pechenegs) are marked in this district on Ptolemy's map (Fig. 16, p. 237).

In 1717, over six hundred years since Peter passed with his Crusaders, the great forest was still there. "We crossed the deserts of Servia" (it is Serbia now), writes Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "almost quite overgrown with wood. . . . After about seven days, travelling



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through thick woods, we came to Nissa, once the capital of Servia. situate on a fine plain . . . and so fruitful a soil the great plenty is hardly credible. The journey we made from Belgrade by land cannot possibly be passed by any out of a public character. The desert woods of Servia are the common refuge of thieves who rob fifty in a company. We had need of all our guards to secure us."

The ballads of the Hayduks of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries fully corroborate this statement.

The land of the great forest is still called the Shumadija (forest-land); but the forest, save for some scattered woods, is gone. The train runs in some seven hours over the ground where Peter the Hermit plodded through the forest for seven days; but great tracts of it lasted well into the nineteenth century, and sheltered the armed bands of Serbian peasants when they rose in revolt, led by old Karageorge in 1809.

Trees being so all-important, it is natural that they should give their names to places.

In Albania we find Arnje (the larches); Brenishti (pine-tree place; "bre," a pine); Blinishti (lime-tree place); Shkoza (hornbeam); Chereti ("cherr" or "charr," beech); Kashnjeti ("kashnja," chestnut); Rapsha and Rapishti (plane-tree).

In Slavonic districts we find very commonly: Bukovina, or Bukovitza (beech-tree place); Vrba or Vrbitz (willow); Dubova, Dubovitza, Dubrovnik (oak-tree place); Granitza (a species of oak, but this word also means "frontier"); Drenovatz, Drenik, or Drenovitza (from "dren," cornel); Jablan, Jablanitza (poplar); Dratch, Dratchevatz (thorn); Trn, Trnovo (also thorn); Lipova, Lipsko ("lipa," a lime-tree). The thorn was used for the huge prickly walls with which the primitive house group was fenced in. The lime supplied bast; the cornel its fruit; other trees, wood.

Where fruit flourished places were named from the crops yielded. Thus in Albania we find Arra (the walnut, which greatly flourishes) and Arramadhe (the great walnut-tree); Lethia and Lethiste (hazel-nut); Mola and Molat (the apple); Kumula (plum); Than (cornel); Shtog (elder) and Dardhe (the pear), or variants of these names, in many places.

And in Slavonic districts Grahova (the bean place); Treshnje and Treshnjevo (of cherries); Jabuka (of apples); Jagodina (wild strawberries); Vishnija (species of wild cherry); Slivna and Slivnitza (the plum); Krushevo, Krushevatz (the pear place); Lukova (of onions); and Drobnjak (garlic).

These plants and trees, so far as I can learn, are indigenous to South Europe, or have been introduced at some very remote period. It is noteworthy that we do not find places named after two of the most widely cultivated crops of modern times—tobacco and maize; nor,



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I believe, after any other recently introduced plant. The plants and trees that have given their names to places have grown in the land for countless years, probably on the same spots—whether those were ruled by Alexander the Great, Stefan Dushan, Abdul Hamid, or the Karageorgevitches.

One at least of the modern place-names is very ancient. Among the tribes who lived in the Balkans when we first hear of them are the Dardanians. They were of Illyrian blood, and as their tribe land was on the watershed of the Morava, Drin, and Vardar, they commanded the routes to the Danube, Ægean, and Adriatic, and were rich and powerful. North of them were the Celtic Scordisci; south was Macedonia, to whose people they were probably closely akin. But in those days the tribe was the unit and the Dardanians harried Macedonia badly. Rome, as Livy tells us (lib. xxvi. 4), was fighting Philip, last king of that name in Macedonia, when the Dardanians, seeing that Roman arms were victorious and wishing to destroy the hated Macedonians, came as a body of "petty kings and princes" to the Roman camp, where they offered their services. True to Balkan type, they sided with a foreign foe against their next-door neighbour—and lived to repent it, as have many others since in a similar position. The "gallant ally," once victory is obtained, is apt very shortly to merit neither title.

The youthful King Philip of Macedon, hearing what they had done, planned furiously to extirpate the Dardanians altogether, and settle Bastarnians on their land. Does mankind ever learn? The same process of attempted extirpation and resettlement is to-day in full swing in these very lands. The Bastarnians were not Illyrians, so could be trusted not to fraternize with the Dardanians, but to "clean the land of them." The plan failed, for a miraculous thunderstorm scattered the advancing Bastarnians and Philip died (179 B.C.). His successor, Perseus, hurried to make terms with the Romans by putting the leaders of the unlucky Bastarnians to death, but this did not help him. The Romans meant to have Macedonia. Cause for war can always be trumped up. Macedonia became a Roman province after the Battle of Pydna in 168 B.C. The province then consisted of Durazzo and Central Albania, and reached to the Tsrna and Vardar rivers. Livy tells no more as to the fate of the Dardanians. When too late they doubtless repented of having helped to bring the Romans in, and maybe revolted, for by the time of Strabo we find them no longer rich and powerful, but quite crushed under Roman rule. They are in the list of peoples whom he states were "once very powerful and now reduced to the lowest conditions." He describes exactly the position of Dardania: "The River Drilon (Drin) can be navigated as far as Dardania. This country is situated near the Macedonian and

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Peonian nations. . . . The Dardani are an entirely savage people, so much so that they dig caves beneath dung-heaps, in which they dwell. Yet they are fond of music and much occupied by playing on pipes and stringed instruments. They inhabit inland parts of the country, and we shall mention them again in another place." But, alas! the rest of Strabo's book is lost. How unchanging has been the Balkan. In the bitter winter of 1903-4 I found the Bulgar peasants of Macedonia, crushed after a fruitless insurrection, digging holes among their burnt villages in which to shelter from the icy wind, and saw women sitting crowded together with their legs thrust to mid-thigh in a manure heap, with the hope of obtaining a little warmth. They were roofless and half-naked. Others crowded into cattle-sheds, where such could be found, for the grateful steam of the manure. The Dardanians, when Strabo visited them, must have been in a similar plight, and, like the Balkan peasants of to-day, crowded eagerly round the man who could sing of their heroic past. The Dardanians cannot have had a more primitive instrument than the one-stringed gusle, which is played in their lands even to-day.

Ptolemy's maps (A.D.140) next show us Dardania. The sketch from Magini's edition, 1621, in spite of distortion, gives a fair idea of its position, showing that it extended north of Nish. Under Diocletian we find Dardania as a province, with Naissus as capital. Diocletian was of Illyrian blood himself, a fact which may have caused him to retain the Illyrian name. Dardania produced at least one very great man. The Emperor Justinian was born there and is said to have been of native stock. His uncle, a peasant, wandered to Byzantium and enlisted in the Imperial Guard, whence, like several others of low degree, he ultimately rose to the purple, and was succeeded by his illustrious nephew.

The name Dardania has but recently died from our maps. In one I possess by John Speed, 1610, it occurs. In one published in Nuremberg in 1770, "Dardania Deserta" is written over a tract of land in the centre of the peninsula. I do not think the name lived into the nineteenth-century maps.

Have the Dardanians, who fought Macedonia and Rome, the people whose blood ran in the great Justinian, left any mark on the land of to-day?

If we may derive the word "Dardania" from an Illyrian word meaning "pear," similar to the modern Albanian "dardhe," they certainly have. Close to the Drin there are three places in Albania called Dardhe. The land is extremely mountainous here, and in all probability has been continuously inhabited by folk of more or less Illyrian blood (Albanians). Beyond the Drin the plain lands became Serbized in the

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early Middle Ages; but the name is not lost. We find it in the Serb form *Krushevo*, *Krushevatz*, and *Krushevitza*. A village I passed near *Prizren* in 1908 had the mixed name *Krusha* (Serb) *i vogel* (Albanian). Now that it has reverted to the Serbs it is probably called *Krusha mala* (little pear).

Another sign that *Dardania* means "pear-land" is found in a map by *P. B. Bertius*, map-maker to *Louis III* of France. He marks the "*Pirustæ*" high up the *Drin* and notes that they are "Albanese." "*Pirusi*," too, occurs in an edition of *Ptolemy* published in 1462.



FIG. 16—PTOLEMY'S MAP, CIRCA A.D. 140

Note *Dardani* and also the *Picensi* (the *Pechenegs*), who are in the district in which they were found by *Peter the Hermit* in the *First Crusade*.

Allowing for the distortion of these maps, these places are all about the same district as the "*Dardhe*" places in modern *Albania*. "*Pirusti*" can only be a Latin form of the pear-name.

Lastly, we have the pear-name in another form. The family name of the great Pope *Sixtus V* (1585-9) was *Peretti*. He was the child of refugees, it is said, who fled "from a place in *Schiavonia* called *Krushevo*." One account identifies this with *Krushevitza* in the *Bocche di Cattaro*. They settled as peasants in Italy and Italianized the name of their former home. One would like to know if the peasant child who became Pope had any touch of *Illyrian* blood in him, as had *Justinian*,



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who wandered from Dardania to the throne of Byzantium. The Pope built the mighty colonnade of St. Peter's; Justinian built St. Sofia.

The wild pear is common in many Balkan places. It is green, hard, and very astringent, but has a pear flavour.

The pear appears as a traditional embroidery pattern. Of the two



FIG. 17—THE LITTLE PEAR. MONTENEGRIN EMBROIDERY

examples, the first is Montenegrin, "the little pear," worked commonly on the necks and fronts of women's shirts. It is so stylized as to be unrecognizable (Fig. 17). The second, a handsome design showing leaf and fruit, is Bosnian (Fig. 18).

In Bosnia a rough perry is made from pears.

### 2. OF APPLES

The apple is believed to be indigenous to Europe. It has at least been widespread from an early date, and has played an important part in Near Eastern customs. Upon Mount Ida in Phrygia, Paris, the son of King Priam, gave the Golden Apple to Aphrodite, as fairest



FIG. 18—THE PEAR. BOSNIAN

of all. Who were the Phrygians? Herodotus and Strabo tell that there was an ancient people of Thrace, known as Bryges, and an Illyrian people, Brygi. Of the Thracian group a number, pressed by the downthrust of peoples from the north, crossed into Asia Minor and were known as the Phrygians. Archæologists reckon this shifting took place about 1250 B.C.

Did the Thracians and their kin, the Illyrians, give apples to the women of their choice? What did it signify? All this is buried in the past—but the apple custom survives.

Gibbon tells how, when Theophilus, son of Michael the Phrygian, mounted the throne of Byzantium in A.D. 829, and had to choose an Empress: "With a golden apple in his hand he walked slowly between the two lines of contending beauties. His eye was detained by the



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charms of Icasia. . . . But an affectation of unseasonable wit displeased the Imperial lover. He turned aside with disgust . . . and the modest silence of Theodora was rewarded with the Golden Apple." Theophilus, the Phrygian, made known his choice as had Paris, the Phrygian.

"The Russians," says Gibbon, commenting on this, "who have borrowed from the Greeks the greatest part of their civil and ecclesiastical polity, preserved till last century a singular institution in the marriage of the Tsar. They chose their brides in the manner of Theophilus."

Gibbon was unaware that not only Russian tsars, but Balkan peasants, gave apples to their brides, and have never ceased to do so. In my time the Golden Apple in Montenegro was usually an orange. But that was a modern innovation. A generation ago the apple was made golden by sticking a ducat or other gold coin in it and represented the bride-price; and as the bridegroom never chose his bride, but had to accept the choice of the heads of his family, it was his father who gave the girl the apple.

A good description of this ceremony is given by Vuk Vrchevitch, writing in 1840. Todor, the bridegroom's father, goes with his uncle (father's brother) and his own brother and the pope to visit Stefan, the bride's father. Todor carries with him a wide-mouthed bottle of rakia, upon which rests the apple as stopper. Stefan receives them with three of his brethren. After some talk, says Todor: "Hey, then! When so it is, here is the rakia, here is the golden apple, here is sweet basil, and here is the ring. Now, pope, bless the ring, and give it back to me."

Off goes Stefan and returns with the maiden. Humbly she bows to all. Todor gives the ring to Stefan, who puts it on his daughter's right hand. Then Todor gives her the apple with a zecchin (Venetian coin) in it, saying: "Mayest thou be happy, O daughter-in-law." The betrothal was then complete.

In Montenegro I often met parties of *svatovi* in their best clothes carrying the ceremonial rakia in a dirty bottle with an orange balanced on top. If asked why they carried the golden apple, they said: "Because we always do." The national ballads show this is true. Marko Kralyevitch gives a "ring and an apple" to the daughter of Shisman Kral of Bulgaria, and Zmaj Despot Vuk gives a "golden apple and a thousand ducats" for the hand of the daughter of a certain Ban of Venice. Luka Jovitchevitch, the local schoolmaster, gave me, in 1907, a detailed account of the apple in the marriage ceremonies in Gluhidol Montenegro as they were when he was a boy. Quinces and pomegranates were used if apples failed. The *djever*, when he came to fetch the bride, gave the bride's brother an apple in exchange for the girl. At the feast

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the two headmen of the bride's bratstvo sat at a table at which there were four bottles of rakia, on two of which were apples. The headmen of the bridegroom's bratstvo sat down in front of the apple-less bottles; each drew an apple from his breast and set it on a bottle. The two pairs of headmen then exchanged bottles, and healths were drunk. When the bride was leaving a bottle of rakia with an apple was brought. The elder of the bride's family, usually her father, took the apple and drank to her prosperity (*v.* section on Marriage).

Golden apples belong to marriage; green ones to funerals, death, and grief. In the ballad of *The Death of the Mother of the Jugovitches*, a raven drops the dead son's hand into the mother's lap, and she murmurs: "O my hand! O my green apple! Where didst thou grow? Where wert thou cut off?"

Green apples were, and probably still are, laid in graves in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and North Albania. In one of Lazar Lazarevitch's popular tales, *Na Bunaru*, an unhappy bride cries to her sister-in-law: "O Petrija, my heart! I wish I could die. Thou shalt bury me. Put plenty of sweet basil with me; bite an apple, and put it into my coffin."

I heard of green apples thrown into Montenegrin graves. In the Herzegovina apples and oranges are tied upon grave crosses, "to look pretty," and "it is our custom." No other explanation could be obtained. But that originally they were intended to soothe or please the ghost is probable. Can they be connected with the pomegranate of Proserpina, and designed, therefore, to keep the ghost quiet in Hades?

At Thethi Shala, in North Albania, I saw a child's funeral. When the Franciscan had read the burial service a weeping woman stepped forward and laid three green apples in the little grave. The Franciscan told her this was not necessary and she reluctantly removed them.

That the apple has long been a valued tree in the Balkans is shown by the number of place-names derived either from the Serbian "jabuka" or the Albanian "mola." The word "jabuka" is used also for any round knob, especially a bright one, e.g. the gilt knob on a tent-pole.

*SECTION VII*

MAGIC, MEDICINE, SOOTHSAYING

1. Magicians, Witches, and Vampires.
2. The Evil Eye and Amulets. Sympathetic Magic and Evil Spirits in North Albania.
3. Witches and Magic in Montenegro and Bosnia. The Vilas. Hidden Treasure. A Magic Plant.
4. Some Balkan Remedies. Medicine and Surgery in Albania. The Worm of Life.
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## SECTION VII

### MAGIC, MEDICINE, SOOTHSAYING

#### I. MAGICIANS, WITCHES, AND VAMPIRES

IN Albania many believe in witchcraft. It plays a great part in the life of the people, who live in a constant state of protecting themselves from evil influences and inviting good ones. Both men and women practise magic. A witch is called "Shtriga." Illnesses and pains not caused by a wound are commonly believed to be the result of evil spells.

Shtrigas not only cause illness by spells; they suck people's blood and drain their lives slowly. Anæmia, tuberculosis, and all wasting diseases are ascribed to this. To be able to do it the shtriga takes the form of a moth or fly, and crawls into the house at night by the keyhole or a cranny.

Thus it is clear that these simple folk long ago realized that insects that fly by night cause fatal diseases, though it is but very recently that the species has been discovered by scientists. The Balkan tribesman did not think an insect unaided could work such harm and ascribed it to wicked human influence.

The shtriga can reduce herself or another person to insect size by smearing the body with an ointment which is a profound secret. Every inch of the body must be smeared or the part left will remain full-sized. In Scutari a young married woman, being pregnant, craved greatly for wine, but was too poor to buy any. Her mother-in-law, a shtriga, stripped her and smeared her so that she became small enough to pass through the keyhole of a certain cellar famed for good wine. "But do not mention the name of God till you are safely back," said the shtriga. Off flew the woman at night, entered the cellar, and drank freely, and felt so cheered and grateful that she cried: "Thank God!" At once she found herself standing naked in her usual form. "A shocking thing to happen to a respectable married woman," said my informant, who knew the parties and firmly believed the "facts." There she had to wait till next day, when the owner came to draw wine. He, good man, was astonished; but on hearing how it came about, kindly lent her clothes to go home in. "The cellar and keyhole are still there," I was told, "and prove the truth of this beyond doubt."

A shtriga, when glutted with blood, will go out in the dark and vomit it. If you can follow her undetected you must scrape up some

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of the blood on a silver coin, wrap it up, and wear it as an amulet. It will protect you from all blood-sucking shtrigas.

Shtrigas especially like the blood of children. Child mortality in all Balkan lands is exceedingly high. It is not unusual to find women who have borne from eight to twelve children, of whom none, or but one or two, survive. Nor could I ever make them believe that it was the way in which the babes were kept that was the real cause. So terrified are the mothers that the Evil Eye may fall on the child that they guard it by keeping its heavy wooden cradle wrapped in a thick woollen coverlet. No Evil Eye, and no ray of light or breath of fresh air, can penetrate. When suckling, the mother takes the cradle on her knees or kneels over it, and raises just enough of the rug to enable her to give the breast; both cradle and child are hung with amulets. The same method, too, is popular in Montenegro and Bosnia. I have seen luckless infants as white as bleached celery, slowly pining away; but the poor mother believed the pining due to a shtriga, who had put a curse on her breast and poisoned her milk, or had looked at the child with an Evil Eye. Only the very strong survive. Marko used to prescribe washing the child with a decoction of walnut leaves. Neither he nor anyone else would believe me when I begged for fresh air and sunlight.

Only she who has caused the evil can undo it. My old friend, Tony Precha, who was a mine of old-world lore, told me how a shtriga was forced to do this: "The child of our neighbour was slowly pining away. It was the work of a shtriga. One day it died. I saw it cold and dead. The father, in a fury, shouted that he knew who had killed it. He rushed out and caught a woman and dragged her in. She screamed and denied that she had done it. He dragged her to the dead child, crying, 'Spit in its mouth!' She refused, and struggled and screamed. If she did not spit before the sun went down it would be too late. She knew this, and that was why she would not spit, for it was already late. Then the father, in despair, put his pistol to her head and shouted, 'Spit or I fire!' She spat. The father threw her out of the door. Then we watched the child. Very slowly it began to revive, and in three hours it was quite well. The father had saved it by acting at once." And Tony saw this with his own eyes.

How apt are most of us to believe that *post hoc* is *propter hoc*.

In Albania evil spirits are most active in the spring. Garlic is tied round children's necks on or about Shrove Tuesday as a special precaution. In Shala, and, I believe, other tribes, the women tie a black cord with three knots in it to the doorposts along with a pair of scissors, the wool-carding comb, and some berries (species unknown). This is not merely to protect the house, but to prevent shtrigas and bad spirits

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working harm to the world in general. It is interesting to find in Herrick's *Hesperides* a charm for stables:—

Hang up hooks and shears to scare  
Hence the hag that rides the mare.

The scissors, too, are among the amulets worn on a silver chain by the women around Nish in Serbia.

Tony was proof against the Evil Eye, for he wore a powerful amulet. A similar one is used in other Balkan lands and in Hungary. A snake is caught by pinning down its head with a forked stick. The head is then cut off with silver—the sharpened edge of a large coin will do. It is then dried and enclosed between two silver St. Georges, and finally blessed by the priest. This protects against all spells. It is evidently a piece of sympathetic magic. Evil is to die as did the dragon—represented by the snake's head—slain by St. George.

Tony's wife was once bewitched and had sharp pains all over, but could not be sure who caused this. The same evil person attempted to bewitch Tony, but, protected by the snake's head, he only felt a few twinges. His wife, who suffered much, was cured by a dervish, who took some hair from the top of her head and from her armpits, tied it up, and burnt it while muttering some unknown charm. The pain went as the hair burnt and never came back. This and the case of the child both occurred at Djakova, at that time a wholly Albanian town.

Marko, too, was cured of similar pains. A Moslem gathered some herbs, but kept their species a secret. He fumigated them over a brazier, muttering a charm. He then tied them up, and Marko had to stand upright with his arms fully extended on either side. The Moslem put the bunch of herbs on Marko's head, drew them down the side of the face, along the arm, back to the body, and down the side of the body to the foot. He then repeated the operation on the other side, and cried: "Pain, pain, fly away from this man to the top of the highest mountain, where there is neither man, woman, nor child, bird nor beast, and stay there!" He burnt the herbs. The pain flew away and apparently remained on the mountain-top, for it never returned.

When I was in the Scutari hospital, very ill with acute sciatica, poor old Marko sought in vain for the right herbs and was grieved at his failure.

Shtrigas were said to be very numerous all through North Albania. At Zumi, near Djakova, I was told that perhaps one-third of the women were blood-suckers; and in Nikaj was assured by the Franciscan in charge that most of the women were shtrigas, and he strove continually against the vile deeds, in which they were assisted by the Devil.

That the whole cult is the remains of ancient, long pre-Christian



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beliefs and rites one can hardly doubt. As is well known, the gods of the heathens became the devils of the Christians.

Marko was greatly afraid of Beelzebub and mentioned him with a curse and a whisper. Belial and Beelzebub were supposed to be the most active. The tribesman followed the advice of his priest and put a cross on his house and tattooed himself with a cross, but he further protected himself with more ancient signs; he planted the skulls of horses, goats, and oxen on poles round his house and fields. Some houses had rows of skulls. I wondered whether, in old days, human ones had figured there, too.

The horse-skull was most valued not only in Albania, but also in Bosnia and in Montenegro. Where civilization has penetrated the horse-skull was often replaced by a twisted petroleum tin whitewashed. Short-sighted devils, seeing it from a distance, could easily have mistaken it for the real thing and fought shy.

Priests are but human. I found one Catholic priest had a whole array of horse- and other skulls round his beehives. He laughed it off when I remarked on it, and added that bees were very liable to disease. He evidently wanted to be on the safe side.

I often found in the mountains a distinct fear of being drawn, or "written," as they always called it. At Vranka I asked if I might draw the interior of a house. The woman was doubtful. She at last said I was not to "write" her or her children, and, to make sure, she drove the children out of the house. In Lurja I was told not to "write" anyone or any house. At Lohja was a wonderful old man, who was reputed to be 110, who boasted that he had sinned but twice in his life—and then it was not his fault. Men in plenty he had killed, but never dishonourably or for money. The company suggested that I should "write" him. Much flattered, the old man sat still for a while, but when everyone shouted that the sketch was exactly like him, he became greatly alarmed, and earnestly begged me never to destroy what I had "written" about him, for at the moment it was torn he would drop down dead. I preserved the sketch, and five years later found him still going strong.

At Seltzi, in the Klimenti tribe, I was told the best way to detect a shtriga is to keep the bones of the pig you ate on the last day of Carnival. All through the Balkans the pig, abhorred by Turk and Jew, is a sign of Christianity. On Easter Day you make a cross with the pig's bones and tie it on the church door when the church is full of people. If any shtrigas are in the church they cannot get out except carried on the shoulders of the man who made the cross. They run wildly round and round and can be caught.

There was, so far as I could learn, no traditional punishment for a



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witch in Albania; and though there can be no doubt that one has now and then been done away with, the general idea was that it was best not to interfere lest worse should follow.

Marko strongly believed this. A woman a few doors away from us was a *shtriga*, and he ascribed much ill-luck to her. He avoided her as much as possible, and did not speak with her. When the autumn began to turn cold, numbers of mice that had summered in the cornfields came into the house. My room swarmed, and they ran over me at night. I told Marko to buy a trap. He seldom forgot things, and when I asked for the trap in the evening, I was surprised that he had not bought one. Again next day I asked him not to forget the mouse-trap; and again there was no trap. Then Teresi, his wife, came to me and said: "Please do not ask Marko to buy a trap; he does not want to." "But why?" She hesitated. "Marko thinks the mice are sent." "Sent?" I asked. "But who can send them?" "Marko thinks that woman—the *shtriga*—has sent them." I was delighted and asked: "How do people send mice?" "Marko says that with Beelzebub all things are possible." "But why should we not kill the mice?" "Because she would be angry and send something worse. Perhaps rats! Who knows?"

It was clearly impossible to trap the mice. I considered the situation, and next day asked if we might have a cat. Marko thought deeply. He then said it was natural for a cat to kill mice; we, in fact, should be powerless to prevent it, and should not be responsible. The cat was obtained—a splendid mouser; and so we defeated the *shtriga*. It is clearly better not to incense them.

Men also are magicians, but I think not so often. A magician appeared at Nikaj when I was there. He was believed by the priest, whose guest I was, and by Marko to be so diabolical that the former ordered him to leave the parish, and neither of them would let me go out without a strong bodyguard; so I never got near him. He was famed for being able to raise many devils by dancing and wagging one leg behind him, and was believed to have come to Nikaj because most of the women were *shtrigas*.

A magician in Albanian is "maghistar" or "menghistar." Magic is "maghi" or "menghi"; "menghi" is also a remedy. In early days medicine and magic were one and the same. The words appear to be derived from, or connected with, "magus." The wise man of old used spells just as did the "wise woman" of the English village.

A strange tale which all believed was told of such a man who had worked much harm with magic in the Djakova district. One of the local beys, therefore, arrested him and locked him up. When he had been some time imprisoned the bey was one day entertaining guests on a feast day. The party was dull, and someone asked where that magician

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was who used to do wonders. The bey thought it a good idea, and the man was fetched from his cell. He was very willing to perform, and asked only for a bowl of water. One was brought, and he made an incantation over it. He then said that if any guest would name a place he wished to see, it could be seen in the water. Someone asked for Malta, and Malta was duly reflected; the harbour, the quay, and a steamer just getting up steam. When it had been admired, the magician asked the bey: "Have I your permission, noble Bey, to go off in that steamer?"

"Certainly," said the bey.

The magician lifted his foot and put it on the steamer in the water-bowl, and immediately went off in that steamer and was never heard of again. No one but myself could see anything improbable in this amazing tale; with Beelzebub all things are possible.

### 2. THE EVIL EYE

The Evil Eye was rampant. At Vukli an unhappy woman told me it had killed all her eight children. A man there, to prove the power of his eye, had stared at a bunch of grapes, which had withered under his gaze and fallen to the ground before the awe-struck spectators. I did not meet this man.

Marko had a milch ewe he greatly valued. One day a mountain woman came to the door begging. He gave her bread, but she was not satisfied, and as she left she looked at the poor beast, which was perfectly well, and said: "What a fine ewe!" Soon afterwards it began to sicken. Marko sent for the vet., who said at once: "I can do nothing—someone has looked at this ewe. You must find her and make her remove the spell." She could not be found and the ewe died. Marko cut her up for mutton. I expressed horror. "The meat," said he, "is beautiful. There was nothing the matter with the ewe except a lot of yellow spots in its liver, made by that woman."

*Protection against Evil Eye.*—Many amulets are worn. Most horses and many cattle wear blue beads (sham turquoise), tufts of badger-hair, which is said to be very efficacious, or triangular leather cases containing inscriptions. A universal protection, as in many other parts of the world, is a horn or horns. Though the horse-skull is now popular to guard fields and houses, the original skull was probably a horned one, e.g. the familiar ox-skull carved on the frieze of many a classical and pseudo-classical building. A pair of boar's tusks, mounted as a crescent and hung round the neck, is a favourite amulet for a handsome saddle-horse. It prevents evil spirits riding the horse at night and

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prevents stumbling. A man I knew galloped for his life across the long, narrow, and slippery bridge at Djakova while some six others were firing at him. Usually one would have led the horse across. But horse and rider escaped unscathed. The former wore a fine pair of boar's tusks and the latter a piece of a meteorite, a good protection against bullets. One Albanian I knew wore a piece of meteorite continually in London and was never once shot at.

A small brass imitation of the boar's tusk amulet formed part of the headstall of the Turkish gendarmerie horse-trappings. I possess a charming little crescent formed of a pair of falcon's talons which I bought of a Maltsori woman who said it was a great "ilatch" (remedy).

As a single horn, a wolf's fang, a cock's spur, a crab's claw are all good. Of a Vlah at Prishtina I bought a dried mole's paw set in silver, especially recommended to keep a child in health. It is a miniature "Fatima Hand."

Another highly valued object in Albania was a "stone snail" (ammonite). Baron Nopcsa, when geologizing, tried to remove a big ammonite, conspicuous on a wayside rock in the mountains. The quarrying of it out was too difficult and he left it; but the stone snail was chipped in the attempt. Marko, who had great faith in stone snails, lamented this much. It was discussed in the mountains and folk agreed it was lucky it was no worse. God alone knew what might have happened had the stone snail been removed.

The cowrie is a potent defence, but is rare in North Albania, so not more than one or two per person are worn, usually round the neck or sewn to the cap—except by the women of Vrakë, who always wear two, one on each side of the face, sewn to the hair-plait. The cowrie is worn by women and children, but not, so far as I have seen, by men.

Though the natural cowrie is scarce, cowrie-land being afar, a large number, if not all, of the silver circular pendants, common all through the west side of the Balkan peninsula, are clearly derived from the cowrie, as Fig. 19 shows. In the older examples the cowrie type is evident. Two wriggly lines imitate the lip of the shell and a round hole the end aperture. In modern specimens sometimes this hole is all that is left; the cowrie is forgotten. In some the shape of the cowrie is preserved, and filigree replaces the wriggly line of the shell lip. In others the circle evolves into a crescent, as the plate shows. It seems possible that the pear-shaped pendant, so common on Near-Eastern, African, and Asiatic ornaments, is, in fact, derived from the cowrie (e.g. Fig. 19, No. 4a).

The cock is very powerful against evil spirits, who "vanish at the crowing." A cock appears on each side of the ornamental head-band worn until recently by the Herzegovinian women round their caps.



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Glass "turquoises" made the head-band yet more protective. Small cocks are still made as heads of pins to fasten the head-dress to the hair in the Herzegovina.

In the prehistoric graves at Glasinatz in Bosnia, tiny bronze amulets, shaped like doves, have been found. In North Albania three wooden

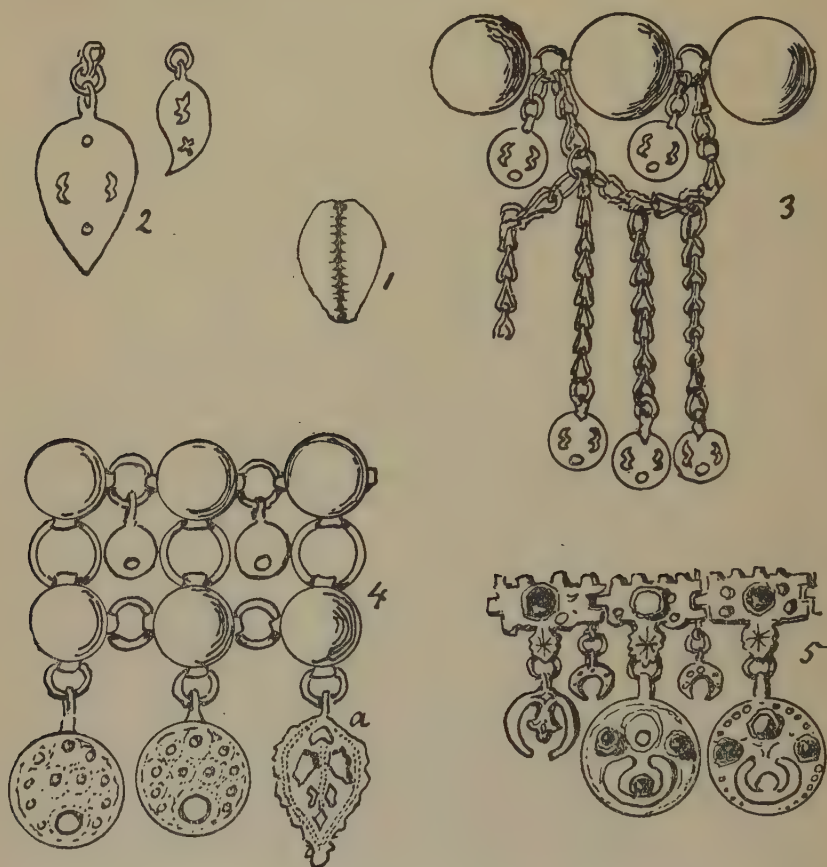


FIG. 19—SPECIMENS SHOWING EVOLUTION OF ORNAMENT FROM COWRY

1. Natural cowry. 2. Pendant common in North Albania. 3. Necklace from Kolashin, Montenegro (old specimen). 4. Breast ornament from Nikaj, North Albania (modern). 5. Old necklace, Scutari.

doves perch on many a wooden grave-cross. Especially good examples are at Boga. A dove forms part of the decorative design worked on the scarlet cloak worn by the Catholic married women of Scutari, as does also the serpent. My repeated inquiries failed to find any explanation of this dove. "It must be some old tale which we have forgotten," was the reply of the embroiderers. The Glasinatz amulets from ancient



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pre-Christian and pre-Slav days show the tale to have been, indeed, so old as to justify its being forgotten. The dove appears, too, on a pair of silver earrings I have from Mirdita.

Many of the Hallstadt period bronze ornaments, notably a number of tiny pendants in the form of buckets, cups, jugs, crosses, and animals, found at Prozor in Croatia (Kunst Histor. Museum, Vienna, Room XIII, 31), are extraordinarily like the strings of little household and other articles which dangle from a silver chain hooked to either side of the head-dress of the women of Nish in Serbia. Shoes, scissors, ploughs, plates, hammers, hatchets, hoes, pistols, the war-club ("buzdovan"), and sword are mixed with frogs, hares, and cocks. The cross, the ladder, and the paten usually hang in the middle, thus bringing the ornament into Christian times as the pistol does into "civilized ones." This curious chain hangs under the chin. It was still being made by the local silversmiths in 1902 and much worn. I had seen nothing like it anywhere else till I found, in the Kunst Hist. Museum in Vienna, a sumptuous gold chain a yard long, found in 1797 at Szilagy Somlyo in Hungary, along with fifteen big gold medals of Roman emperors set in gold frames—three of Maximianus, seven of Valens, one of Valentinianus, one of Constantine the Great, two of Constantius, and one of Gratianus. Thus from A.D. 284 to A.D. 383. The official catalogue describes it: "The principal object is the chain (No. 290), with models of implements of all sorts." I found ox-yoke, ladder, adze, several hammers, trident, straight sword, shield, war-club, pincers, tongs, scissors, ploughshare, axe, curved sword, reaping-hook, spear-heads, and an outstretched hand. In the centre hangs a ball of topaz, on which stands a golden vase on which two lions set their paws. Above the ball and attached to the chain is a curious dugout canoe in which a man with an oar sits. The whole is beautifully worked in solid gold and is very magnificent—the lordly ancestor of the peasant ornament still made in inferior silver at Nish.

The twisted chain-link is the same; so are the bulk of the implements—and nothing resembling this chain of implements have I found elsewhere. Did the Hallstadt folk of Prozor wear those little bronze pots and vases on a chain? For whom and when was the golden chain of Somlyo wrought? And why do the smiths of Nish still imitate it? It is easier to ask questions than to answer them.

In Bosnia very elaborate head-dresses were, till recently, worn by women with plumes of coloured grasses, peacock's feathers, beads, coins, and dingle-dangles, all designed to attract the Evil Eye away from the wearer. Perhaps the subtlest way is to wear a small looking-glass, for the Evil Eye then throws its evil glance upon itself. Best of all was to wear the glass at the back of the head on the headkerchief,

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and catch it there, thus literally "saving your face," as did the women of Konjitz in Bosnia.

Illness being very largely ascribed to Evil Eye or magic, amulets in Albania are usually called "derman" or "ilatch," both of which words also mean remedy.

*Sympathetic Magic.*—In this the disease is supposed to act in accord with some object or other and disappears as it does.

A cure for jaundice was thus performed by a Moslem wise man on the child of a Scutari Christian. He tied some red wool round the child and some yellow wool round a red rose in the garden. He ordered the red to go out of the rose into the child, and the yellow to go out of the child into the rose. In a few days the rose wilted and yellowed and the child recovered its rosy cheeks. The efficacy of the cure was undoubted.

Marko had another he thought better, because it could be carried out at any time of year. You put a small fish in a bucket of water. The patient had to stare at it as it swam round and round. If he stared at it long and steadily enough, the disease went out of the patient into the fish, which died.

In 1912-13, owing to the Albanian Revolution and the Balkan wars, large numbers of the mountain tribesmen who pasture their beasts on the Bojana plains in winter were unable to return to the mountains, and were blocked in the malaria swamps all the summer, with terrible consequences. Almost all were struck down with a virulent form of the disease. I went through the worst districts with a load of quinine, and found the people trying to cure their greatly enlarged spleens by slowly roasting the spleen of a sheep at a fire, and muttering spells which ordered their own spleens to diminish as that of the sheep shrivelled at the fire.

Epilepsy was not uncommon in the mountains. It was looked upon as a possession by evil spirits. I once saw a woman fall down suddenly in a fit. Some men at once rushed up and, telling me to get out of the way, fired their revolvers alongside of her head. This was to scare away the evil spirit. As she soon recovered, they believed they had done so. I once saved a woman under similar circumstances from being flogged. Luckily she recovered quickly. But it is not so very long ago that lunatics were flogged in England.

Marko knew of a certain cure for epilepsy, but difficult to obtain. If you see a snake swallowing a frog, you must throw a black handkerchief over it. This scares the snake and it disgorges the frog. Keep the handkerchief, and when someone falls in a fit, throw it over him. He will then disgorge the disease as the snake did the frog. We kept a careful look-out, on our travels, for a snake eating a frog, but we never found one.

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Disease as a rule is attributed to evil spirits. I met with one notable exception. It was at the Serb monastery of Dechani. The dead body of a man had, some years previously, been found on a lonely track in the neighbourhood; there was no wound of any kind upon him. His death was a complete mystery, till a search showed that he had secreted on his person some small objects of value, stolen from the church. It was then clear to all that he had been struck dead by the Holy Mother of God. It is of interest to note that in an early Montenegrin ballad (Vuk Karadjitch, vol. i) the Holy Virgin figures as "Fiery Maria"; she is the sender of lightning and St. Elijah is the thunderer. Together with some other saints they scatter death over the land to cure the people of impious ways. Here, no doubt, we have pagan gods masquerading in Christian garb.

*Sympathetic Magic in Montenegro.*—In the Tzrmnitza valley I was told of a cure for hernia, performed by "wise women." The operator expected a fee of about twopence and the gift of a cheese or some eggs. She must know the exact name and bratstvo of the patient, but his presence was not necessary. She put some freshly drawn water in a long-necked jug ("ibrik") and set it to boil on the fire, saying: "Water, I call on you three times from heaven to earth—let the bowel of Mr. X return to its place." She crossed the water three times. When it boiled she poured it quickly into a shallow metal dish, repeating the above words, and turned the ibrik mouth downwards into the water. As the ibrik cooled a certain amount of the water would rise up into its neck. The more the luckier—for in such way should the bowel of Mr. X return to its place. The charm is repeated daily till relief is experienced. A fresh fee is exacted each time. I was told that five or six women in Gluhidol practised this art, and that Montenegrins afflicted abroad would write home to have the charm performed.

In Montenegro and in Albania an infallible cure for a scorpion-bite was oil in which scorpions had been soaked in the sun. Marko always had a bottle full of them in the window.

Near Njegushi, Krsto showed me a perforated rock through which children had been passed to cure them of disease. This had been done especially at the time of the cholera epidemic in 1860. Old Mitar, Krsto's brother, remembered this well, and said that they had also tried placing people in the middle of a field and ploughing round them to isolate them from the disease, but, he added sadly, it had not done much good.

In the Tzrmnitza valley I learnt that a similar protection against cattle plague had been practised till recently. On news coming that cattle plague was in the neighbourhood, all were ordered to gather their beasts in a field. Two pairs of oxen were selected which must be



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brothers and not yet have begotten a calf. Two youths were also chosen, also brothers who had not yet begotten a child. The oxen were yoked to ploughs. The ploughs were started from opposite sides of the field. When one plough reached the spot whence the other had started and a complete furrow surrounded the herd of beasts, the assembled peasants fired their guns over the herd and each drove his own home. The ceremony was called "oborivanje" (ploughing round).

Under magic, too, one may class various beliefs about pregnancy. A pregnant woman must not see a snake or the child will be marked like one. She must not see or hear a sheep being slaughtered or the child will snore; must not eat the meat of a cow in calf, or a lump will grow under the child's neck.

A pregnant woman can learn what will be the sex of her child by throwing a piece of dried fish-roe into the fire. If it goes off "pop, pop," there will be a boy; if it fizzles out miserably, a girl.

Should she crave for anything during pregnancy she must beware of touching herself with her hand, for should she crave wine and touch her face, the child will be marked on this spot with a red stain; or milk, and it will be marked with white. Patches of white hair are said to be thus produced. If she craves pig meat, the child will grow bristles on the spot touched. These are all attempts to explain personal peculiarities, and similar beliefs prevail still even in England.

If anyone jumps over a child in a cradle, the child will be stunted. The cradle must be jealously watched. This is reason rather than magic, for if the cradle be kicked over by a careless jumper, injury to the spine might well result. The belief that the jump causes the evil is a protective belief for the child.

It is not easy to say where magic ends and medicine begins. Those who sought the help of a European doctor took care to supplement his treatment with amulets and charms—just as English patients will go on taking someone's patent mixture, warranted to cure everything, and follow a doctor's prescription at the same time.

When looking after wounded Bulgars at Ochrida in 1904 I noticed that a wounded child wore round his neck an antique Greek silver coin—a rather fine specimen. I asked the child's mother to sell it to me. She said she must ask leave. When she next appeared she had asked consent of the grandmother, and it was not to be sold. As a great favour it had been lent for this child to wear. It had been many generations in the family and had cured countless persons. As a matter of curiosity I asked what price it was valued at, and received the reply, "Not all the gold in the world could buy it"—which settled the matter.

All through the Balkans great value is set on written amulets. The Moslems write sentences from the Koran, the Christians from the



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Gospels. In Serbian these are called "Zapis." They are enclosed in silver cases called by the Turkish word "hamaljija" both by Serbs and Albanians; or they are sewn up in leather. Such leather cases are usually triangular. Most of the Catholic women of Zadrima, Albania, wore two brass crucifixes on a chain and a leathern triangular amulet case. Such cases are often fixed to the horns of oxen. When a Christian finds a Christian "writing" has done no good, he will go on the sly to beg one from a Moslem, and vice versa.

Priests, both Orthodox and Catholic, write an immense number of amulets, fold the paper neatly in a triangle, thread it on a string, and direct that it shall be tied over the spot where the pain is felt; and peasants will tramp many miles in search of this help. At Ochrida, where I had to examine the patients before the doctor saw them, I came across an up-to-date development of this treatment. A child was brought with his neck thickly swathed. When the wrappings were off, his neck was an alarming dull purple, as though horribly contused. The amulet had been written in copying ink and had come off on his skin! The mother fondly hoped its magic had soaked in.

In both Albania and Montenegro I have seen Moslems flock to a church or a well-known Christian shrine in search of a cure. At the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity, on the festival day at Plevlje, I saw two Turkish gendarmes bring in a lunatic with his arms tied behind him and lay him in front of the altar during service in order that he might be cured.

Several thousand peasants, Orthodox, Catholic, and Moslem, used to crowd on Trinity Sunday to the shrine of St. Vasil of Ostrog in Montenegro—a purely Montenegrin saint. The shrine of another local saint at the Piperski monastery is also in great repute. The best way to obtain a cure is to pass the night lying on the ground, with the head beneath the coffin, holding the relics. For this privilege a high fee was asked. At Ostrog I was told that a Moslem stricken with paralysis had been brought from Mostar on a mule, and had paid twenty-five napoleons to pass the night thus. Next day he was well and returned home happy. But he was an unbelieving Moslem, and soon declared he did not believe the saint had cured him: he had got well of himself. Next morning he awoke again paralysed, and the twenty-five napoleons were under his pillow. The saint withdrew the cure and returned the fee.

An amulet with a good writing on it works good; but evil writing can in the same way work evil.

While I was in Scutari a Turkish officer fell in love with a Catholic girl. He acted honourably and asked her hand of her parents. To their horror the girl not only wished to marry him, but she went to the

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house of a relative of his to live there till the marriage was arranged and declared herself a Mohammedan. As she was not of age, her parents appealed to the archbishop, who intervened, and she was sent home. Then, to save her from Turkish influence, she was sent to friends at Podgoritza. Here she obstinately declared that she wished to be Moslem till those in charge of her saw that she wore a Turkish amulet round her neck. They cut the string and threw the thing in the fire. Scarcely had it burnt up when she at once became Christian again. So ended her poor little romance, and I was told it was unlikely she would ever find a good husband owing to this fatal infatuation. Marko considered it, indeed, a mercy that the evil amulet had been discovered, and was horrified when I said I was sorry for her.

*Evil Spirits.*—In addition to witches and magicians in Albania there are many mischievous spirits. These are the "ore," a word which an Albanian often translates as "devil." The ore, however, are not the ordinary devils known to Christianity; they are relics of some pre-Christian beliefs, and are usually seen at night as fiery sparks, and delight to prevent a traveller from proceeding by circling round him and confusing him completely. Once, when starting from Scutari to Djakova, Tony Precha was thus stopped on the way. There is but one thing to be done, and that is to wait till the first cock crows, when they vanish at once.

Another delight of theirs is to ride horses at night and knot their manes. These knots should on no account be untied. The ore also guard hidden treasure, and by confusing the seeker prevent him from finding it.

The ore were generally believed to be females.

Much magic surrounds hidden treasure. Throughout the Balkans there is a belief in masses of treasure hidden in ancient days. The hider consigned it to the care of the earth "amanet," which may deliver it up only if certain formulæ are observed. A person ignorant of these formulæ may dig on the right spot and find nothing but sticks and stones. An example given me in the mountains was that of a man who buried some money at the foot of a tree, at the same time bidding the earth not to give it up till two mice had drawn a carriage round the tree. Unfortunately a man passing by heard this. He returned home, caught two mice, tamed them, and with some trouble harnessed them to a tiny box. He then returned to the tree, drove the mouse-chariot round it, dug on the spot, and found the money. I suggested that he might have done so without troubling to catch and train the mice, but was assured it was impossible. The earth would not have yielded that which had been consigned to it. Much time and ingenuity is spent over the search for treasure. It has led to the destruction of

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much probably valuable material, for when many an ancient grave has been opened and nothing but pottery and bits of bronze or iron found, the treasure-seekers, enraged that the gold should have thus been turned to rubbish because they did not know the formula, have smashed it all into small fragments.

One way to find treasure is to spread a layer of wood-ash over the spot where it is believed to lie. Next morning, if it bears the footprint of any bird or beast—a fox, sheep, etc.—such a creature must be sacrificed upon the spot. A black animal or bird with no touch of white on it is particularly efficacious.

In many places I had to declare to the headmen that I had not come to search for treasure.

Those good days are past. Albania is now being searched for petroleum, and, unless the kindly earth refuses to give it up, the land will be devoured by foreign speculators.

I was once taken a weary tramp in Berisha to see and explain a marvel. On a great mass of rock was a slight hollow into which a man's hand would fit, and near it a depression that was supposed to be like a mule's hoof-print. Both were natural weatherings of the rock. But the native theory was that ages ago, when the rock was soft, a man had hidden a treasure and made the rock flow over it. He had then marked the spot with his hand and the hoof-mark of his beast. Unless the right formula could be obtained there was nothing for it but to quarry and blast the huge mass, and without the formula even this might not avail. I vainly said the marks meant nothing. My excited escort would not let me leave till I had "written" (i.e. drawn) the marks, and promised that if learned men in England could explain them I would return and show them how to find the treasure.

"Hoof-marks" are favourite things in the Balkans. One was shown me on the shores of Lake Presba and ascribed to Sharatz, the magic horse of Marko Kraljevitch; and in a cave on the slopes of the Lovchen in Montenegro I was shown, as a great marvel, a small roundish depression—a hoof-mark, also "made when the rock was soft." Krsto thought it possible that Marko Kraljevitch had once stabled Sharatz here, and several people asked my opinion about it. In the long weary hours, when watching goats on the mountains, men ponder over such trifles and build fancies upon them. Weary and weary are those endless hours. I never met anyone who did not speak with hate of the watching of beasts he had had to do when young. Often was I asked to build a factory where a man would be given enough bread for a day's labour and no longer have to watch goats on the mountain. The foreigner is now starting works; I doubt if they bring the expected happiness.

In the hill-side on the left of the road from Djakova to Prizren I



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was told there is a magic cave which contains an ancient city. No living being is in it, but the bazaar is full of every fine fruit, flesh, and garment. Few have reached it, for it is guarded by the "ore." One man wandered in, and was untouched till he tried to pick up something in the bazaar. Fiery serpents darted at him, his torch went out, and with great difficulty he reached the entrance, where he was found unconscious. Poisonous gases are, no doubt, the explanation. No one would undertake to guide me to the place.

### 3. WITCHES AND MAGIC IN MONTENEGRO

Witches in Montenegro and all Serb-speaking lands are called "vjeshtitza." I was assured that they used to exist but did not now; but in fact they were still believed in. Here as in Albania it was believed that a witch could enter a house in the form of an insect and suck blood. Iké always hastened to kill a moth which entered the hut, and remarked that they did no good; and I have heard "Perhaps it is a vjeshtitza" murmured. Witches could sail upon water in the shell of an egg eaten on the 1st of March. Iké always smashed all egg-shells at once, saying it was best to do so, but gave no reason. Many people in England habitually smash their egg-shells—a custom probably handed down from days when a similar belief existed.

Witches, I was told, were stoned to death in old days if they were known to have killed anyone. As in many other lands, the test for a witch was to bind her and throw her into water. If she floated, she was a witch. This had happened, I was told, within the recollection of still-living persons. Medakovitch, writing of the eighteen-fifties, says that a blood-feud was caused by a fight, in which four men were killed, which arose over an attempt to duck a woman of the Raitchevitches.

While I was in Montenegro it was still the duty of the bride's brothers to guard her till the svatovi fetched her, lest some evil person should tie a knot in the fringes of her "strukka" (straight shawl, worn like a plaid)—for, if so, she would miscarry or bear a deformed child. Many knots would make delivery impossible.

I never heard a witch openly referred to, but there was talk of mysterious women "who knew many things." These supplied drugs and charms to ease labour and cause the childless to bear.

But I did not learn how these spells were made. In Serbia are still rites carried out which necessitate that the witch shall stand stark-naked under a tree at night. This suggests the holy trees and groves of old Slavonic beliefs.

A favourite medium for making magic ointment, I was told, is wax



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dropped from church candles. As these droppings are regarded by the pope as his perquisite, they are hard to get.

In his Canon of 1349, Stefan Dushan legislated against magic. Law 109: "Magicians and poisoners caught in the act shall be punished as directed by the Holy Fathers." This is said to refer to Byzantine Church law. It is of interest to find the mysterious action of poison classed with magic.

Dushan's efforts were vain, for as late as 1905 we find Vladan Georgevitch, in his *Last of a Dynasty*, ascribes to magic the influence of Draga over the unlucky young King Alexander Obrenovitch. "Do you not know," said Rista Bademlitch (Councillor of State), "that she has made him so foolish with all kinds of love-potions that he stands for hours under her window begging to be let in."

*Vampires*.—I found belief in vampires in Montenegro, where they are called "tenatz." To become a vampire is "potentziti se." The vampire is a dead man or woman who rises from the grave and works evil at night. A corpse must be carefully watched, for if a cat leaps over it, it surely becomes a vampire. I was told there had been recent cases where death had been caused by vampires. Their deeds seem to be confused with those of the witch ("vjeshtitza"), for both are said to suck blood.

A strange tale was current in the Tzrmnitza valley. A young man loved a girl, but her parents, as is customary, had already betrothed her, and she was forced against her will to marry her betrothed. Her lover left Montenegro in despair and died abroad. After his death he returned home as a vampire and visited the woman at night. Much frightened, she told some of her neighbours. She bore a child by the vampire, which Krsto, who knew it, assured me earnestly was so exactly like the deceased man that its paternity could not be doubted; and as the man died abroad it was impossible to lay the vampire and stop his visits. A corpse suspected of being a vampire can be prevented from rising by transfixing it with a stake, preferably whitethorn. A pope must assist at the ceremony; or the corpse may be exhumed and lifted from the grave by means of whitethorn poles and then burnt; or it may be hamstrung. A way to detect whether a corpse is a vampire is to try to lead a black foal with no white hair on it over the grave. If the foal refuses, this is a sign that the corpse is a vampire. Stefan Dushan, in Law 20 of his Code, refers thus to this practice: "If for magical purposes men are taken from the grave and burnt, the village where this takes place shall be fined and the pope who has assisted shall be unfrocked." The law failed; the ceremony is not yet dead.

In Bosnia I found much belief in vampires, here called "lampir" or "vukodlak" (lit., wolf's hair)—a word which suggests the werewolf.

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Several local Austrian governors told me that in the early years of the Austrian occupation the burning of lampirs' bodies was frequent. The Government forbade and suppressed the practice and caused much discontent. A recent case (told me in 1906) was caused by an outbreak of enteric at Vlasenitza. A young man died. His wife sickened and vowed that her husband had returned at night and sucked her blood. The terrified villagers wanted to dig up and burn his body. The authorities forbade it. The lampir was then seen and heard by many persons whose blood he sucked. Fifteen persons died. It would be interesting to know how many died of enteric, and how many because they believed they were doomed to die by the lampir.

The peasants all through Albania and Macedonia I found to be extraordinarily affected mentally if convinced they must die. They would then make no effort to live, but simply "lie down and die."

In Albania I heard of several cases in which a man's death being foretold by "reading it in a bone," he proceeded forthwith to sicken and die; and there seemed no reason to doubt the truth of this.

I have often seen a patient refuse all food under the belief that he would die in a week, and have resuscitated many who were very far gone by forcibly pouring egg and brandy into them. The result of the pick-me-up was sometimes comically quick. After an hour the patient would ask for another and decide to live. Without it he would certainly have died, as all the family continually said: "You are dying," and did not try to make him eat.

Belief in the fatal visit of a lampir has, no doubt, caused death.

Since the civilizing power of Austria has been removed a fresh instance of corpse-burning has been reported from Bosnia.

*Vilas*.—Last but not least the "vila," a female spirit which haunts the mountains, is very capricious, and works much evil as well as some good. In Montenegro I was told vilas used to be plentiful, but had been driven away by the advent of artillery. Maybe some still haunted the deep limestone caverns.

Of old, vilas sometimes swore sisterhood with mortals, and even married them. But they were excessively jealous, and when a handsome youth wished to marry they were apt to kill the bride.

Krsto told me a tale "that happened a long time ago in Montenegro." A vila disguised herself as a beautiful maiden and caused two brothers to fall in love with her. She urged them to fight each other and promised herself to the conqueror. They fought and one was killed. The vila then laughed and flew away. The unhappy survivor killed himself.

I asked how, as both were dead, it was known that the vila had caused the trouble. Krsto merely replied it was a fact well known to all.

But the sympathies of the vilas were Slavonic, for till recent times

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they warned both Serbs and Montenegrins of the approach of the Turks, and saved Serb heroes by covering them with mist and hiding them from the foe.

Some examples from the ballads show the character of vilas in "pre-artillery" days (Karadjitch Collection, vol. ii, No. 37). Marko Kraljevitch and Voyvoda Milosh ride over the mountains. Marko asks Milosh to sing to him. Milosh replies that last night he drank wine with the Vila Ravijojla and she forbade him to sing. Urged by Marko, Milosh sang. The vila tried to out-sing him, but Milosh had the finer voice, so the infuriated vila shot him in the throat with an arrow and he was like to die. Marko pursued her furiously on his horse, Sharatz. The vila flew up into the air. Marko hurled his war-club and brought her down, and threatened to smash her if she would not cure Milosh.

The vila then called on him for sisterhood in the name of God and St. John, and promised to cure Milosh if he released her. He did so; she gathered herbs and made Milosh far stronger than before. The ballad ends by her advising the other vilas not to shoot at heroes when Marko is about. On several occasions afterwards she helps her "pobratim," Marko. The mediæval ballad-maker has depicted a wine-swilling, revengeful, and murderous fairy who suits her savage environment.

Jealousy and cruelty are seen in the *Death of the two Dragitchitches* (*op. cit.*, vol. i). Dragitch is about to celebrate a great festival. He is giving his daughter in marriage and marrying his two sons. His wife dreams that two ravens, with their wings bloody to the root, bring a black letter in their claws. She prays her husband to be satisfied with marrying their daughter and to put off the sons' wedding for a week. He refuses, and the train of groomsmen and the two bridegrooms ride off on fine horses. But the vilas watch them unseen and from behind the trees shoot their arrows. At midday a halt is called, and then only are the two young men missed. The father remembers the dream, and goes in search of them in fear: "By the side of the path he found his two sons. The accursed vilas had shot them. Dragitch cried out as doth a fierce serpent . . . then he drew his bright sword and cut off his sons' heads and put them in his saddle-bags. And he moved their bodies from the blood-stained path and covered them with leaves, saying: 'Farewell, my two sons, this day have I wedded ye.' " He carries home the heads, and tells his wife that he has brought her two golden apples as a gift. And the cursed vilas thank God (an odd thing for them to do) for the woe they have caused.

The phrase "beautiful as a vila" is in constant use in Montenegro, and in recent ballads the vila still warns Montenegro against invasion.

I once rode up-country on a handsome white stallion, which belonged



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to my faithful Albanian horseboy, Shan, who had lived all his life in Montenegro. The horse was turned out to graze at night. Next morning, before mounting, I began to comb out its tangled mane with my fingers. Shan anxiously begged me not to. The vilas, he said, had been making love to it all night because it was a beauty. It had been covered with sweat. If I untied the knots the vilas had made we should have an accident. Shan, being an Albanian, probably meant the "ore" when he said "vila." I heard of no other case of a vila acting thus. But the ore are notorious for such conduct.

*Hidden Treasure.*—As in Albania, so all through Montenegro and the Herzegovina, and probably in other Balkan lands, it is believed that mighty treasures lie hidden. The treasure of the Royal Nemanjas has yet to be found, and that of Voyvoda Momchilo at Pirlitor.

Opinions differ as to the best means of treasure-hunting. The most certain thing is when the site of the treasure is revealed in a dream; you are then sure to find it. If a steer that is perfectly black stands still on a spot, bellows, and butts his horns into the ground, there is almost surely treasure beneath. But there must not be a single white hair on the steer. If when the third cock crows in the morning a number are seen gathered together holding council, there is surely treasure beneath the spot.

Vuk Vrchevitch gives a good account of treasure-seeking in the Herzegovina. A certain man dreamed of hidden treasure. Early before the sun rose he went with some of his brethren in search of it, and took with him a black cock and a black wether. Arrived at the spot, he killed the wether and made a circle of blood round the site. They began to dig, and after a while reached a slab of stone. On this the black cock was sacrificed. They were now so near success that one of the brethren cried aloud: "God help us now and for ever." But God's name must not be invoked in aid of magic. When they raised the slab they found, indeed, a stone box—but the treasure had been turned to ashes.

Some poisoned water should be carried when treasure-hunting to kill the serpent which often guards it.

If a black stallion is led to the spot where treasure is suspected to lie and refuses to walk over it, it shows treasure is, or was, there. The foundation for these tales is the large number of Roman and pre-historic graves that have been opened. The ashes and fragments of iron and bronze found in them were ascribed to the fact that a wrong spell had been used and the treasure transmuted to something valueless—in the eyes of the searchers.

*A Magic Plant.*—In Albania I was told there grows a most valuable plant. Any stone or iron touched by a leaf of it at once falls to pieces. To persons thievishly inclined it is extremely useful. The difficulty is



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to find it; only the tortoise knows where it grows. You must, therefore, search for a tortoise's eggs and, having found some, build a little stone wall round them. Then you wait till the mother tortoise comes to see how her eggs are getting on. When she sees the wall, she is very angry, for she knows the little ones will not be able to climb out and so will starve. She butts the wall with her head and pulls it with her paws, and when she finds her efforts are vain, off she goes to find the plant. Presently she comes back with a leaf in her mouth, touches the wall, and down it goes. You then know it is the right plant and you take the leaf from her. Sometimes hobbled horses, grazing on the mountain, touch this plant with their hobbles, which at once break and the horse runs away. It might, of course, be the work of horse-stealers, but undoubtedly sometimes it is the plant. I heard this tortoise tale in many places, for tortoises are very common. Many people knew someone who had successfully tried the above plan—but I never met the man who had done so.

In all these tales of magic and witchcraft it is clear that the beliefs and usages of a remote past have survived. Magic played a great part of old in the Balkans. Thessaly was notorious for its witchcraft.

One tide of invasion after another swept the Balkans. The Romans brought new gods and then came Christianity; and while Christianity struggled for a firm footing, Mithraism wrestled with and almost overthrew it. The inrush of pagan Slavs trampled on old and new alike, and before a new order of things was evolved and established came the Turk with yet other beliefs and usages. As each high-tide subsided the points of the prehistoric rock-bottom have shown above the surface. Each tide in ebbing has left debris; but not one has as yet entirely overwhelmed that rock-bottom.

### 4. SOME BALKAN REMEDIES. MEDICINE AND SURGERY IN ALBANIA

Magic and disease are so closely connected, that magic and medicine are naturally intertwined also. Nevertheless, remedies other than spells are made use of.

These are largely herbal. Both in Albania and Montenegro one hears often: "Every herb has its disease; every disease has its herb." The sick Albanian peasant always asked me for a "bar" (herb), and the Montenegrin for "trava" (grass or herb).

Among the Albanian tribes were local doctors famed for medicinal lore inherited from their ancestors (carefully guarded secrets); and in all Balkan lands knowledge of herbs is boasted of by many an old woman.

In Albania the word used for doctor was always "hekim." This

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indicates that the first professional doctors inland were Turkish. Previous to the Turkish conquest, when the Serbian Empire was at its height, it is clear that there were no Serbian doctors of repute, for the archives of Ragusa and Venice contain letters asking that the medical man of one or other of the coast towns may be allowed to leave his post temporarily in order to visit an ailing Serbian magnate, and the ballads sometimes say of a sorely wounded hero: "Shall we send for a doctor from the coast?"

The Serbian for doctor is "ljechnik," from "ljechiti" (to heal). This derives from Teutonic, and is akin to our old word "leech." The word "doktor" also is used. The professional doctor was evidently a foreigner. Magic was probably the oldest Balkan remedy for disease. Disease is an inexplicable mystery which demands a mystery to combat it. Wounds, on the contrary, are shrouded in no mystery and demand different treatment.

### HERBAL REMEDIES IN ALBANIA

*For Sciatica.*—(1) The limb is beaten with stinging-nettles till blistered—a counter-irritant. I refused to allow this to be tried on me, though a neighbour vowed it had cured her. (2) The limb is rubbed with a paste of roasted onions boiled in oil. This in the form of gentle massage gave some relief.

Pounded onions are commonly used for dressing contusions where the skin is broken in Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro, and appear to have a soothing effect. Such a dressing at least prevents dirty clothing from rubbing the wound and, by keeping it clean, assists healing.

A great variety of herbs and leaves are valued as "cures" when par-boiled, and applied hot to sprains, contusions, abscesses, boils, etc. In most, if not all, cases it is the hot fomentation, frequently renewed, which does the cure, rather than the particular herb. Thus at Berisha they fomented Marko's sprained ankle with ferns (*Ceterach* and *Trichomanes nigra*) boiled with wild peppermint, taking much trouble to search for and find the right kinds. Boiled walnut leaves are also believed in.

*For Weak Eyes.*—Pound up wall pellitory, squeeze out the juice and mix with salt. To be dropped twice a day into the eye. Maximum dose, three drops.

*For a Cough.*—Oil in which some tortoise flesh has been boiled; or a decoction of wild-sage leaves boiled with honey.

The leaves of the wild sage dried and made into "tea" make a very pleasant drink used in Montenegro and Albania.

*Tuberculosis.*—This disease, in all its forms, ravages the Balkans.

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The favourite remedy in Scutari for the pulmonary form was a drink made of the root of "bader" (*Iris Dalmatica*), which grows wild plentifully. It soothed the throat and allayed coughing somewhat.

*Diarrhœa*.—A decoction of oak bark—a strong astringent—was efficacious.

*Constipation*.—There was no local remedy. It was a very common trouble and I was constantly asked for "English salts."

Opium "tea," made by boiling haphazard a handful of poppy-seed, was given recklessly to stop pain. It was common to give a small dose nightly to infants to keep them quiet. In a communal house, where some twenty people sleep together, a crying child is not tolerated. Children suffering from opium poisoning were often brought to the Austrian hospital, the mother being quite unaware of the cause of the child's state.

*Animal Remedies*.—When I was suffering from acute sciatica, was paralysed with pain, and quite helpless, Marko wanted to slaughter a sheep in the yard and wrap me in the raw hide. As is customary when people are ill, all the neighbours crowded into my room to cheer me. When I was on the point of collapse with pain and heat, the cat jumped on to my bad leg, hurting me horribly. The neighbours chorused: "Thank God! The cat has jumped on her. Now she will not die. The cat always knows."

Then the Austrian doctor carried me off to his hospital.

The reason given for the raw hide is that the sheep eats many herbs and their virtue will soak into the patient. But in fact the raw hide is a hot fomentation. Other beasts are used.

This same Austrian doctor told me he was called to a moribund man. The hut was crowded, it was midsummer, and the heat and stench indescribable. Ten days before, a black cat had been split and applied to the patient's abdomen and was still there.

*Enteric Fever*.—This is endemic all through the Balkans. In Albania a horrid remedy was believed in. The dung of a dog which had been dropped on a stone and dried in the sun was pounded and given in water. I vainly tried to prevent this on one occasion; but the dose had been prepared by the local priest, who had the greatest faith in it. This repulsive remedy was included in the official pharmacopœia of Vienna till 1795, to be used internally for dysentery and griping pains. In Albania, at any rate, patients survived the treatment. Did the dog's dung supply an intestinal bacillus which combated that of enteric?

*Emetic*.—Human excrement mixed with water was given. Mixed with rakia it was given to an habitual drunkard with the idea of curing him. The experiment failed.

The boiled flesh of the glass snake (*Pseudopus pallasi*), a common



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enough creature near Scutari, was esteemed as very good for consumptive patients.

The flesh of the common land tortoise was thought of great value for all convalescents. When I came out of hospital Marko had prepared a savoury stew for my supper. I ate heartily. "Thank God!" cried the good old man, "you have eaten 'breshké,' and you will soon be strong and well." He fetched the shell of the large tortoise which had provided my meal.

So common are these tortoises that an Albanian proverb says: "There is no mountain without a wolf and no plain without a tortoise."

*Diseases.*—Intestinal troubles of all kinds are rife in the Balkans, owing to bad food, and in some districts to a morbid appetite for very acid food. Intestinal worms—tape, thread, and round—are very common. A preparation of buckthorn is given.

Infant mortality is excessively high all through the Balkans. If a mother can nurse her child till the flocks are giving milk plentifully it stands a chance; if not, it is fed on parboiled maize-flour and heavy maize-bread. The abdomen swells greatly, and the child often dies; and, as I have stated, desire to preserve the child from the Evil Eye causes many to be half-suffocated in the cradle. Only the toughest survive, and they are very tough. The Albanians, Montenegrins, and Macedonians, whom I have had charge of as sick or wounded, do not suffer from shock, nor are they as sensitive to pain as West Europeans.

*Wounds.*—The Albanian tribesmen were far cleverer with wounds than with sickness. They had a traditional antiseptic treatment which was very successful. Old Marash Hutzi of Hoti, who had learnt the art from his grandfather, explained it to me. A wound must never be touched with water; it must be thoroughly washed out with rakia (brandy distilled from grapes). He judged the state of a wound by smelling it carefully. When well washed—when it perforated a limb he poured rakia right through—he dressed it with an ointment he made from white wax, olive oil, pine resin, and a decoction of the bark of green elder twigs. If deep, he plugged it with wool soaked in this ointment. In hot weather the dressings should be changed twice a day; and so long as the wound was foul he washed it daily with rakia. He saved a leg—compound comminuted fracture caused by horse-kick—which the Turkish military surgeon was going to amputate and made a quite usable, though rather shortened, limb of it. The grateful patient gave him thirty francs, the biggest fee the good old man had ever received. He had made his own instruments—some probes, forceps, a small saw made from a barrel hoop, and some knives.

From his grandfather's and his own experience he had a fair knowledge of where the main arteries ran, "where it was safe to cut and where



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it was not." As "first aid" for a wound he prescribed the yolk of an egg and a lot of salt, well mixed and applied on a pad of wool; afterwards dress as above. It was very necessary, he said, to leave no splinters of bone in a wound. He described how he had spent two hours removing seventeen splinters from a fractured tibia with some little forceps he had made himself. You must work slowly and very carefully. You must watch your patient and compare his symptoms with those of others. So you learn. He had lately mended the leg of a horse by slinging it to the branch of a tree and putting the limb in a splint.

A shot through the knee, he declared, was usually fatal, and one through the ankle was difficult to make a good job of. But three fingers' breadth below the knee-cap and three above the ankle he could always be sure of curing.

For inflammation he used leeches freely. Had just treated a woman successfully for apoplexy. She was "dead" on one side and speechless. He bled her from the temple on the "dead" side and seven times from the arm on the other side. She was better next day, and he bled her five times. She completely recovered. Marash expounded head-surgery. The head, he said, is like an egg. There is a shell, then a skin, and then the meat. If this skin is broken through you can do nothing; if it is not and the fractured skull is only pressing on the brain it is curable. He demonstrated how a flap should be cut and turned back. The broken pieces of bone must be carefully removed and replaced by a piece of hard-dried bottle-gourd chosen to fit the shape. The ointment must be added and the flap replaced and dressed. Some men were very clever at cutting away bone. He had never cut away skull-bone himself. A man in Mirdita had lately cut away a large piece of the skull of an injured man successfully. He indicated the upper part of the left parietal. The "kiriijee" boy from whom I had hired horses then told us that he had a piece of bottle-gourd in his head. Had been knocked on the head and stunned in a quarrel, and been unconscious till a "hekim" had taken out the broken bone. Now he said he never felt any trouble except that his head itched a good deal. I felt his head carefully, and there certainly was a hard edge to be found.

Marash Hutzi had a great reputation for curing wounds and certainly deserved it. It is of interest to find that a strictly antiseptic method was being used so long ago as his grandfather's time in the Albanian mountains when in England we still washed our wounds with any pump-water. Marash was over sixty. Trephining, I was told, was still practised to cure pains in the head, but I did not meet a case.

A dressing much used for slight wounds was olive oil in which a quantity of pounded leaves of the common St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) had been macerated in the sun. This seemed to have some

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antiseptic properties. This plant is still used for similar purposes by homœopathists.

An ingenious way of keeping a limb warm is to wrap it in hot dough.

It was always difficult to persuade folk to have a running sore or boil cleaned up, as they believed that it was very healthy—a disease was coming out, therefore the more pus the better. I persuaded the father of a little girl who had scratched her face and got it covered with nasty sores to take her to the Austrian hospital. The doctor cleaned it up in a few days and the father was furious. He was sure the disease was now driven into the child and said he should hold the doctor guilty if she died. Luckily she flourished.

Two examples of resistance to pain and shock, out of very many I have known, will give an idea of Albanian toughness.

A Shala friend of mine, Cherim Nue, came one night from his mountains to Scutari to ask me for a "bar" (herb). He was in great pain with a swollen face. As he had two very bad teeth, I told him to go to the Turkish dentist and have them out, and gave him the fee—four chereks. Next day he returned triumphant to pay me back one cherek. He thought it a pity to waste four on the dentist, so he bought a pair of dentistry forceps from a gipsy smith for three chereks and pulled out his own teeth. He showed me how he had managed a good wrench by sitting on the ground and twisting his left leg over his right arm. He set up as dentist in the mountains, and last time I saw him told me with glee that I had made his fortune. He had pulled out most of the teeth of the neighbourhood.

The following case gives an idea of what an Albanian peasant can survive: A man was standing on top of the steps of a village house in Zadrime loading a cart. He slipped and fell on to the sharp stakes that formed its sides and ripped open his abdomen. The peritoneum was badly torn and the bowels protruded. His family filled the wound with a favourite remedy—mud mixed with grass; and he lay in his hut for a week. As he then appeared to be dying they put him on a cart and took him some six or eight hours over a bad track to the Austrian hospital at Scutari, where they arrived at midnight. The doctor who was called up told me that the man appeared to be moribund. The wound was in a horrible state of mixed mud, pus, and bowel. "More from professional instinct than because I thought it would be the least use, I cleaned it and dressed it. But I was so sure the man would die that I told his comrades they were to wait till next day to take his body home in the cart." To his surprise, when he went his rounds next morning the patient's high temperature had fallen, the wound was going well, and he was comparatively cheerful. He made good progress for some days, but had a fixed belief that "English

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salts" was the best remedy for all internal pains and begged for it. As he was refused, he induced his friends next visiting day to bring him some and took a huge dose. The results were disastrous: he collapsed. "This time I made sure he would die," said the doctor. But he did not, and three weeks afterwards he walked home, apparently none the worse.

*The Worm of Life.*—This singular belief I found common in the Albanian mountains; I can find no parallel to it elsewhere. A worm is said to live in the ear and be the centre of the life of the individual. If the worm dies, the individual dies. I learnt this first in Shala. A very sickly child was brought to me for advice. He suffered from bad ear-ache and headache. I found his ears completely blocked with filth and wax, and one flyblown with maggots in it. I told the parents to take him to the Austrian hospital in Scutari and wrote a note for them to take to my friend, the doctor. As usual they wanted an "ilatch" (remedy) to work an immediate cure. I explained that no ilatch was of use. The ear must be washed out by the doctor. At once there was great excitement. Old Marko, much shocked, explained to me that washing would drown the worm and the child would drop down dead. All were amazed that I should suggest such a thing, saying reproachfully: "But, lady, you who have been to school must surely know the worm of life is in the ear." The wax in the ear, they said, was the worm's excrement. I objected to Marko: "But this is folly. You might as well say that the moisture from the nose proves that a worm lives there." He retorted contemptuously that everyone knew there was no worm in the nose.

The child was not taken to the hospital and no doubt died untended.

Further inquiry showed that this belief in the worm of life in the ear was very general. I have not found it recorded elsewhere; nor is it easy to explain.

An ancient and strange belief that certain animals and women could conceive through the ear existed up to the Middle Ages. Plutarch gives as a reason for cat-worship in Egypt the "fact" that the cat conceives through its ears. A Latin hymn to the Virgin, "*Quæ per aures concepisti*," offers this belief as explanation of the Immaculate Conception. The ear thus appears to have been regarded as the seat of life—or at least the gateway to it.

Is the Albanian worm of life a last echo of such a belief? It is easier to ask questions than to answer them.

In the section on "Taboo on Showing the Face" I suggest that the habit of covering the ears with a head-wrap may indicate that the ears were a vulnerable spot. It is, at least, an interesting coincidence that ear-protecting and a belief in the ear as a centre of life are found in the same district.



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### 5. REMEDIES IN MONTENEGRO AND BOSNIA

In both of these lands there was less of "home-made" treatment and more trained doctors were practising. Especially in Bosnia, where there was an excellent and active Austrian medical service. In Montenegro matters were not so advanced. For the most part their trained men were trained in Russia, and about them the less said the better. Two I worked under at Podgoritzza were unspeakable—dirty, ignorant, and cruel. The one good surgeon was Austrian-trained.

In Montenegro I learnt some local remedies from the older people. Vuk Vrchevitch gives an account of how a sword-cut, which severed three ribs on the right breast, was treated in 1853 by Marko Ilitchkovitch of Tzrmnitza. He poured wine into the gaping wound and rolled the patient backwards and forwards as though cleaning a barrel, and continued pouring wine and rolling till the wine came out clean and not blood-stained. He then drew the edges of the wound together and stitched them, and spread some ointment on the wound with a feather and more ointment on the bandage, which he finally bound round the patient. This dressing was changed every day, and the patient recovered in fifteen days. Asked why he washed it out with wine, the doctor replied: "We are divided at the waist into two storeys like a house. If I had left that blood which had flowed into the upper story it would have rotted there and the man would have died." Unluckily the prescription for the ointment is not given. The treatment resembles that of Marash Hutzi, and the wine and oil of the Good Samaritan.

Till recently, skull surgery like that of Albania was practised in Montenegro and called "Sharonanje." According to Dr. S. Trojanovitch (*Narodna Starina*, viii, 1924) this operation is not known in other Slav lands. This is another proof that the Montenegrin descends from the older Balkan inhabitants rather than from the Serb.

The curator of the Belgrade Museum in 1902 told me the museum greatly wanted a trephined Montenegrin skull. A Montenegrin immigrant, an old man, was known to be trephined, and the museum staff awaited his death. He had recently died, but his relatives refused to sell his skull, kept guard over his grave, and threatened vengeance to any desecrator. An attempt was being made to bribe a Vlah from over the border to obtain the skull, but whether this succeeded I do not know.

I found it usual in Montenegro to wash wounds with wine or rakia, with the curious proviso that whichever you chose to have your wound washed with, you must drink for the rest of your life. Mitar, Krsto's eldest brother, had been shot right through the lungs in the Russo-



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Turkish War of 1877 and taken to a Russian field hospital. He was at death's door, and his family, distrusting "foreign" remedies, stole him at night and carried him home. Here they poured unlimited rakia into his lungs through the wounds, which were suppurating badly. He graphically told how frightfully he had coughed, and coughed rakia out of the holes in his back and chest as well as from his mouth; and under this treatment he completely recovered. The big scars on back and chest showed the severity of the wound. The old-fashioned bullets made a frightful wound at exit, tearing out the flesh. I saw such wounds in Macedonia in 1903. Instead of the neat little hole of the modern bullet you got a ripped and ragged wound as big as the palm of the hand.

Nothing would induce old Mitar to touch wine. His inside had been washed with rakia and rakia he drank to the end of his days. If he touched wine he would certainly drop down dead.

In Njegushi I learnt an infallible cure for pneumonia. Pound the dried gall-bladder of a pig with some gunpowder and drink it mixed with rakia. Gunpowder and rakia were held in high esteem as a powerful cure for most diseases. Abbé Fortis, in his *Travels in Dalmatia* (1778), mentions this as a favourite remedy of the Morlachs.

*Tuberculosis*.—Montenegro was, one might say, riddled with it. I could learn of no local "remedy." Probably because, so far as one could learn, it had been introduced comparatively recently—that is, some seventy years ago, when the Montenegrins began to go out into the world. Especially youths going abroad to study caught the infection and came home, not merely to die, but to spread it far and wide, for whole families slept together—and do still—and nowhere in the world can the habit of spitting be more universal or more frequent. And "civilization" brought glass windows and iron stoves and put a stop to ventilation.

The schools were hotbeds of infection, especially in winter, when the floor was covered with saliva, and the snow-soaked clothes of the children steamed in the hot, close room. But I vainly strove to get the schoolmasters to stop the spitting. They said: "It is our custom and we always do"—illustrating the fact by skilfully spitting round my feet without hitting them. It was believed that the habit was wholesome.

In Bosnia the Austrian authorities carried on an energetic anti-tuberculosis campaign. Spitting on the school floor was forbidden. Children who spat were made to clean it up. This made the parents furious, and in spite of explanations they reckoned it as "Austrian tyranny."

In Bosnia a "remedy" was to bury a bottle of wine along with a person who had died of tuberculosis, and to dig it up after seven years. Those relatives of the deceased who drank the wine would be immune.

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In Bosnia a remedy for coughs was to burn oak-galls and inhale the smoke.

In all districts that I visited in the Balkans I found mud used to dress wounds by the common people; but never heard of a case of tetanus, though I have had hundreds of wounded through my hands. The land is very poorly, or not at all manured, which may explain this fact. The Austrian doctor in Scutari told me that in seven years he had had but two cases—both came up the river on ships, so were not local infections; also, though "Albanian women are not so well cared for at childbirth as an Austrian cow," he had never seen a case of puerperal fever, and believed neither the tetanus nor the puerperal-fever germs had reached these districts.

But with these two exceptions the Balkans are decimated with disease. It is a mistake to imagine that a rough, simple life produces health.

The apparent sturdiness of the survivors blinds the outsider to the intensity of the struggle for existence and its mass of victims. Compulsory vaccination has immensely reduced small-pox in many districts. It is interesting to see how an epidemic will sweep up to the vaccination line—and there stop short. But exposure, hunger, and toil wear out many a peasant in early middle age; and disease takes a heavy toll as well. The two worst Balkan scourges are tuberculosis and syphilis. In Montenegro and in Albania there are districts where every individual is reputed to be infected with the latter. So, too, in Bosnia, and there alone it was being scientifically combated by the Austrian medical staff.

Of tuberculosis the Bosnian doctor—a Vienna-trained man—with whom I worked in Montenegro said: "We South Slavs are the most tuberculous people in Europe. Thirty per cent. of us are badly infected. I do not count an 'apex,' for I have one myself."

Leprosy is sometimes seen, but not often, and much skin disease is carried probably by dirt and vermin.

Finally, those individuals who succumb to neither disease nor hardship are unbelievably tough, and live on to a green old age, often active to the last. That there are as many centenarians as is popularly believed I doubt. No registers of birth have been kept and dates are fixed haphazard. A gay old boy at Rioli was said to be 102. Five years afterwards I met him again and he was 120. To prove this his family earnestly declared he must be very old, because his father lived at the time when the ancient Romans—those people who made the bits of money you dig up out of the ground—were living at Podgoritz. Others were grandfathers at the time of the Russo-Turkish War; of one it was said no one could remember him without white hair, and so

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forth. Seventy to eighty years was nearer their age than a hundred; and many who looked sixty were younger.

Women are early worn out. Especially in Montenegro, there is a very great difference in height between men and women. Women I found usually shorter than I am (5 ft. 3 ins.); whereas men well over six foot are not uncommon. The Montenegrins seemed proud of this difference, and when I said that of course, if a girl was married at fifteen and had four children before she was twenty she never grew to her full height, they were very angry indeed.

*Lunacy and Mental Diseases.*—Lunacy is very generally believed to be possession by evil spirits, if the lunatic is a violent and dangerous one. Exorcisms are much used both by the Catholic and Orthodox priests. In Orthodox monasteries lunatics are often treated with great cruelty, and beaten and otherwise maltreated in order to drive out the spirits. I once saw an unfortunate man, almost naked, chained like a dog to a sort of kennel in the yard of a monastery. He was very quiet and half-dazed. The monks admitted that they beat him whenever he resisted or tried to escape.

The women of the Balkans, completely exhausted as they only too often are by severe toil and perpetual child-bearing and lactation, often suffer from neurasthenia and "hysteria." A curious form is not uncommon among the women of Macedonia and Montenegro. I am told it occurs also in Russia. It begins as a hiccough, and becomes more and more intense until it is a violent and fast-recurring spasm of the diaphragm. The hiccoughs become louder and louder till they are an uninterrupted crowing like that of a hoarse rooster. So quick are they that the patient cannot breathe. Just as she appears to be in danger of choking, she suddenly pulls herself together, draws a long breath, gives a gasp or two, and recovers in a few minutes. At intervals the attacks may go on all day; nor, when the habit is acquired, is it easy to cure. To a certain extent it is under the patient's control; but not entirely. When I did relief work among the Bulgar peasants in Macedonia after the revolt in 1903, I met a case which had been reported as "a Turkish atrocity" by relief workers unacquainted with the complaint. I visited the village where she was. She was quite quiet. So soon as she heard I was an English relief agent she began to "crow" loudly and had one spasm after another. By way of a test I said: "Tell her if she makes that noise I will do nothing for her." And after some gasping she recovered and made no more noise while I was there. But she was not cured.

The Balkan remedy is one of suggestion. On a saint's day the patient is taken to the Orthodox church. On St. Petar's Day, at Moratchka



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Monastery, I saw three. They stood with their hands on their knees and their heads thrust under the desk from which the pope was to read the Lessons. The desk being draped, their heads were hidden and their hind-quarters protruded grotesquely. If they could refrain from crowing during the reading of the Lessons they would be cured. The cure failed. Hardly had the pope begun to read when a hideous and unearthly din arose beneath his desk. No one intervened; no one even smiled. The pope read steadily, though his voice was drowned by the noise. At the end the three were led away—uncured. But I was told that as a rule the cure is successful. It may well be, for the Balkan peasant is very much affected by suggestion. He pines if he believes he has been cursed; he dies if he believes his death is "egil" (written in the Book of Fate). I did not see or hear of a case of crowing hysteria in Albania.

In Montenegro I was told a remedy for fever. It was to make fire with a fire-drill of wood. The patient helped to work the drill. The fire went out of him and into the wood and he was cured. Perhaps the exertion of drilling produced sweat and so relieved the patient. Krsto believed greatly in this cure.

### 6. SOOTHSAYING

For some inscrutable reason man in many lands has thought his gods were likely to choose the insides of animals as a means for revealing the future.

"Plucking the entrails of an offering forth, they could not find a heart within the beast." So the augurs warned Cæsar to beware the ides of March. Balkan folk still find their fate written in the bones of certain animals.

I first saw the bones read at Selchan, a village in the Spata mountains, near Elbasan. It was in those days a very remote spot, and a Russian Consul was the only foreigner who had visited it within memory. Most of the male population were "wanted" by the Turkish Government. But for the purpose of my visit the friendly Albanian Mutasarif of Elbasan arranged a truce. We were halted outside the village for a parley, and also to give time to all the men of military age (whom the Government was trying to conscript for the Army) to hide in the bushes. I was then received with great joy, and even greater hospitality. The ancient headman, Constantine Suliman, a fine figure in a white fustanella, swore friendship, and hustled the women to spread a noble banquet of roast lamb, stewed fowl, cheese, milk, and maize-bread.

The district had neither church nor mosque. Every inhabitant had



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two names: a Christian name, under cover of which he refused military service; and a Moslem one, under which he refused to pay poll-tax. Constantine Suliman declared the plan worked admirably, and his tribe was practically independent. Pressed by my Christian interpreter, who was grieved at the absence of any religion, our host said that when a priest occasionally visited the place he was allowed to baptize all children that had meanwhile been born.

It was a fit spot for seeing, for the first time, the soothsaying of ancient days.

The two armed men sent with me as escort gorged the meal, and grinned affably at the heads of tribesmen which now and then bobbed up from behind bushes to peep at us.

Then Constantine Suliman picked up the fowl's breast-bone and held it against the sun. He carefully traced all the lines made by the marrow, and said gravely: "One of us five will die within a fortnight." All took it very seriously, except my interpreter, who was an employ   of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and said it was very wrong to read bones, but was uneasy. He and I survived the fortnight. I have always hoped that Constantine Suliman was not the one—if any—who was shot. I saw him last, against the sky, waving dignified farewells to us, and remember him as the man who had lived eighty years and never seen peace, but had kept his honour clean according to his lights—and which of us can say more?

All through the North Albanian mountains I found the reading of bones common and greatly believed in. In times of danger and political tension the primitive rite in wild surroundings was sometimes strangely dramatic.

In Montenegro, too, the custom was common. I saw the bones read there in October 1912, just before Montenegro declared war and set the war-ball rolling which has not yet quite stopped. Battalions of up-country Montenegrins were pouring into Podgoritz and camping near the barracks. I wandered among them. An old man a-squat on the ground with some comrades was hungrily devouring some food they had brought with them. He raised a well-picked mutton bladebone against the autumn sun and stared and stared. I waited, and he cried out despairingly. His comrades jeered. But the old man turned to me and said: "I see blood everywhere—much blood." The younger men said it must be Turkish blood and were cheerful. But the old grey-head had seen war before they were born and was uncomforted. Sadly he told me he feared it meant evil, and I left him staring into the bone in vain search of hope. He read, indeed, but too truly. The war of 1912, into which Montenegro rushed with such hope of greatness and glory, was the beginning of the end of Montenegro.

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During that war I again heard the bones fatally read. An Albanian friend of mine in Podgoritz, owner of the local omnibus, was a great student of bones. He spent his leisure reading them as we others do books. One day he begged me to come for something very important, for my eye and ear alone.

The windows of his little room were closely curtained to prevent spying, and in the half-darkness was a pile of bladebones. He chose one and showed me a white opaque spot on it as large as a sixpence, and gravely asked if I knew what it meant. Now an opaque spot in certain places means death. "Yes," said he, "but what a spot! Did you ever see such a large one?" I never had, nor had he. He was troubled and anxious and pondered and pondered. The position of the spot meant someone must die soon. But it was so large, it must mean a great man. "Could it mean anything less than a king?" That was what he wished to ask me.

There flashed through my brain: "Are they plotting to assassinate King Nikola?" (He was very unpopular, for the war was going badly for Montenegro.) I discreetly said: "I do not know." He decided that it must mean a king—and shortly.

Just about a fortnight afterwards King George of Greece was assassinated. It was quite impossible that the seer should have known of any plot. We had hardly any news from other fronts.

It was one of those coincidences which, in the popular mind, overwhelm a thousand previous failures and annihilate reason. My poor friend was awestruck at the revelation that had been granted him.

The last time I heard, and probably ever shall hear, the bones read was at Durazzo, when the Prince zu Wied was there, in the fatal summer of 1914. Durazzo was seething with representatives of every Power that had a finger in the Balkan pie. France, Russia, and Serbia were doing all they could to start a war. Italy was active. Fighting was going on and the hospitals were full of wounded. On the quay a very ragged mountain man insisted on speaking with "the Kralitza" as they called me. He had come a long distance to consult me. He was eager and excited. Pulling a fowl's breast-bone from his sash, he held it against the blazing sun. The bone glowed red. The others said he was stupid and did not know how to read the bones. But he insisted and cried vehemently: "Gjak! gjak (blood, blood) everywhere, everywhere nothing but blood and more blood." And about a week or two afterwards the Great War began, and blood has not yet ceased flowing in the Near East.

Enough examples. That very many people believe the bones is undoubtable. I have been at meals where elder men have stopped

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the younger from looking at the bones because we were all happy, so "why pry into unknown evils?"

It is not easy to say how the bones are read. Bone-readers will not tell their lore. I have pieced together the facts I gathered. The bone must be the breast-bone of a fowl (Fig. 20), or the blade-bone of a sheep or goat—no others serve. In Albania I found the fowl's bone most generally used, and in Montenegro the sheep's blade-bone. In both lands the fowl or sheep must have been bred by the house of the reader; otherwise, though it can tell of foreign affairs, it knows nothing of the fate of the house. The best fowl is a cock which is black without a white feather. It must be decapitated. If the neck were wrung the blood would all go wrong and the marks be useless.

This is the Albanian reading of the breast-bone: A good seer can tell at once if the fowl has been bought or bred. The keel is the part used. In the thickness of the neck-end (A) runs a line of marrow which tells the fortune of the house. A hole in it means the house-lord's death, and a break means an illness or accident. Breaks and branches from this main line show illness, accident, or death to members of the family. Red spots and patterns in the bone mean blood. Some holes mean graves, others cradles, according to where they are placed. I failed to learn where. The sides (B) of the bone tell public events. When a line belonging to the family forks it means a quarrel in the family.

The late Mgr. Cozzy, Apostolic Delegate at Scutari, told me that he had tried hard to learn how to read the bones, and a man who refused to tell him said: "You make black marks on paper and know what they mean; but I do not. God makes marks on bones and you do not know what they mean; but I do."

Such is the belief in bones in Albania that I believe men have died from sheer terror when their death has been read. Thus, an only son—well known to a friend of mine from Djakova—was at a family feast. He picked up a fowl's bone, looked at it, and threw it down with a cry. His father asked what was the matter and the youth said: "In three days you will bury me." His horrified father picked up the bone and saw the reading was only too true. He cried out in grief: "In three days we shall bury thee." His kith and kin wailed on all sides: "In three days we shall bury thee." The poor lad blenched and sickened. He could not eat, gave up hope, and died.

"When he saw in the bones he must die," said the Djakovan, "he died." And with more truth than he was aware of he added: "You

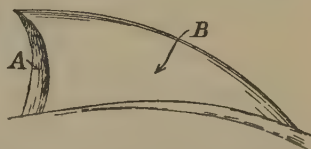


FIG. 20.—FOWL'S BREAST-BONE  
FOR SOOTHSAYING



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would not die because you do not believe it. We believe it; it is true to us."

It is not truth that sways men, but what men believe to be true; and that is a very different thing.

I had many strange examples given me of bone-reading which had come true. It is important that the meat be torn from the bone with the fingers and not touched with a knife.

The following details about blade-bone-reading are from Montenegro. Bone-reading, I believe, is also practised in Serbia and Bosnia.

The best sheep is a black one with no white hair. The right blade-bone should preferably be used and the meat torn off with the fingers. The joint-socket represents the house, and its depth or shallowness shows if the house will be full of wealth, i.e. harvest and crops. The ridge on the blade shows if the flocks will flourish. Small holes in the blade are cradles. Their position measured from the upper corner of the bone with the last joint of the thumb shows if the births will be within the house or without it, i.e. in the house where the bone is read or in that of a relative. The shapes formed by the marrow, as seen when held against the light, show where fighting will take place and when. A bone with no marks in the centre means a peaceful year. Red marks near the edge mean frontier fighting. Opaque white spots are death within or without the house, according to position. Other marks—I know not which—show banners and victory.

When a man has read the bone and another wishes to do so, it must not be passed from hand to hand, but must be laid down by one man and picked up by the other. Bone-reading in Montenegro is called "gatanje." To read a bone is "gatati." The shoulder-blade is called "lopatitza" (little shovel). Fastened to a stick it is often used to shovel the hearth ashes.

*Dreams.*—In Albania and Montenegro, and, I believe, all through the Balkans, there is great belief in dreams. The ladies of the *intelligentsia* in Cetinje had dream-books (Italian) and discussed each other's dreams at length. Dream-books have circulated so much that it is not easy to tell which beliefs are old native ones.

In Montenegro I was told it was lucky to dream of a room full of corn. To dream of a dead man means that it will rain. A girl dreamed that her hair grew right down to the ground. The women told her this meant terrible disgrace would fall on her, and she was so upset that she came a considerable distance to consult me. I reassured her.

In Albania it seemed to be believed by many of the tribesmen that their "hi" (soul or shadow) left them sometimes during sleep and its experiences formed the dream. Dreams were very strongly believed in. One Sunday morning Marko, much perturbed, told me his wife,



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Teresi, had dreamed that I should receive bad news from home that day. I laughed and reminded him there was no post till Tuesday. At that moment there was a knock at the gate. The kavass from the British Consulate brought me a note to tell me of the death of King Edward VII. After this it was vain for me to say that dreams foretold nothing. Teresi had dreamed the death of King Edward and the matter was beyond dispute.

The man who looked after my horse dreamed he had seen my sister in the bazaar buying butter and was greatly mystified. No one could explain it, but all were relieved when I had a letter from her saying she was quite well.

An Englishman who travelled in the mountains and was popular was dreamed of. He was seen fording with difficulty a river and hurting his hand as he climbed out. It was decided that he would get safely through a great danger.

It was considered extremely lucky to dream of climbing up a mountain—perhaps because the tribesman places Heaven on a mountain-top. It is lucky to dream of fishing.

### 7. THE CURSE

A curse is dreaded still in Balkan lands; it is closely related to a spell. But a spell is accompanied by pagan rites; a curse is without rites—it acts by suggestion. Someone believed to be powerful cries: "May you wither and die!" and you proceed to do so. A curse can be retrospective, and is then considered peculiarly horrible. One of the worst is for a mother to say to her son: "May my milk poison you!" Though he be a grown man she may thus harm him.

A good example is found in the Serb ballad of the *Murderess Mother* (Karadjitch Collection). The mother was wroth with her son, Jovan: "O Jovan, 'tis five years since thy mother gave thee a wife, yet neither boy nor maiden has been born to thee. Someone hath cast a spell on thee; or evil people have wrought wickedness; or has someone cursed you on your marriage? or dost thou not like the maiden? or she like not thee? Something there must be. Kill thy wife, O my son, and I will give thee a better of better stock, who will bear thee offspring!" Jovan refuses with horror, and his mother unbuttoned the coat on her bosom, and tore open her shirt and drew forth both her breasts, crying: "O Jovan, disobedient son! If thou obeyest not thine old mother, may thy mother's milk be leprous to thee, which thou hast sucked from these breasts! Kill thy wife and I will give thee a better." And young Jovan was greatly afeared of his mother's terrible curse,

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and he thought: "Better that I lose my soul and then repent of my sin than that I should ruin my mother's desire (for offspring), and hearken not to my mother's curse." He then orders his young brother Bogdan to do the deed and bring back a bloody knife as token. Bogdan refuses, and Jovan wishes to kill him, too. Bogdan weeps and prays his mother to remove the curse. But she will not, and Bogdan consents and leads away his sister-in-law. She implores to be allowed to pass three days in church, and he grants her prayer. There a miracle is vouchsafed her and she bears a beautiful boy. Jovan and Bogdan rejoice. But the mother, even then, will not pardon their disobedience. Filled with wrath, she stabs herself, and, very properly, "the demons seized her soul."

Here is a picture of the ancient power of life and death that parents had over children as well as of the power and terror of a curse. We see, too, the dawning influence of the Church upon the minds of a savage people. The tale probably dates from the days when Christianity was beginning to break down the pagan customs of the peasantry.

Strange is it to find the retrospective curse in the official report of the trial at Salonika of the Serbian "Black Hand" officers in 1917. Naum Dimitrijevitich, a journalist, giving evidence about the lawless state of the Serbian Army on July 25, 1914, states: "Major Dobrosav Gjorgevitich came up quickly, cursing as he came my *father and mother*. He reached me and overwhelmed me with his horrible curses against the *father and mother* of the Prime Minister, Nikola Pashitch, and Stojan Protitch, Minister, and all the Radical members. . . . He shouted: 'Now you shall meet your God. You shall never get away from here.' Then he cursed the *father and mother* of Colonel Okanovitch, etc."

Thus even among the *intelligentsia* the use of the retrospective curse persists. Pashitch's parents had long been dead. Small wonder the peasant still believes in it.

Mothers in Albania and Montenegro will still tell you, when a child has died, that a curse has been put on their breasts.

In Montenegro, in the days when the vladikas (bishops) were said to be rulers, they had no temporal power in fact. They had no way of enforcing orders save by terrifying recalcitrants with a threat of excommunication or by putting curses on them. The vladika's curse was greatly dreaded. When Danilo Petrovitich decided to rule as temporal Prince and refused to be made bishop, I fancy he shore himself of much power. The curses of Vladika Petar I were very powerful.

He is said to have cried to an evil-doer: "May leprosy devour you!" And a year afterwards the man died of it. To another he cried: "May your stock die out!" And Medakovitch, writing of Montenegro in

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1844-54, tells the tale and says the entire bratstvo was extinct. The fishermen on the lake had to pay the vladika yearly a barrel of fish for fishing rights. No barrel arrived. They were asked why, and wickedly replied that they had not been able to catch any fish. The vladika was patient. Still no fish arrived. The fishermen then explained: "There are now no fish in the lake." "No," said the vladika firmly, "*there are none and there will be none.*"

To everyone's horror the lake was fishless. The fishermen hurried to the vladika and prayed him to withdraw his curse. He kindly did so—and the fish reappeared.

This mighty prelate was canonized by the Montenegrin Church shortly after his death, and is the revered St. Petar Cetinski.

His curses, however, pale before that laid on the Greek statesman Venizelos in 1916. I give it to show what the Orthodox Church is capable of when roused, and the present belief in the curse in the Near East. Venizelos was denounced for having "betrayed the nation to the Anglo-French." "Therefore against the traitor Venizelos we have invoked the following injuries: the ulcers of Job, the whale of Jonah, the leprosy of Naaman, the bite of Death, the shuddering of the dying, the thunderbolt of Hell, and the malediction of God and man. We shall call for the same injuries upon those who, at the forthcoming elections, shall vote for the traitor Venizelos, and further pray for their hands to wither and for them to become deaf and blind. Amen."

Curse-pits were dug, and crowds, filing by, put their curses upon stones and hurled them into the pits.

True, the ecclesiastics who laid the curse got into trouble. But they had, in fact, but expressed—flamboyantly—the feelings of the people. Venizelos, having once fallen, has never returned to power. The peasant has little faith in elections—he has every reason to doubt their efficacy; but of the efficacy of a real good curse he has ample evidence.

In Albania a curse may lie for generations on a family and end it. I visited the house of a family group at Plani in Pulati. The curse was that the family should not multiply, and I was assured it was dying out. No one knew who had laid the curse and all attempts to remove it had failed. Eighteen persons were living crowded in its one room. In cases of this kind it is obvious that unwholesome surroundings, bad water, or inherited disease is the origin of the "curse." To those so "cursed," however, the thing is a mystery, and mysterious means are the only ones used to combat it.

All medicine begins as magic. The invention of the microscope has at last revealed many of the real "demons." But even in England there are still people who prefer quack remedies to scientific "demon"-slaying ones.



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### 8. THE OATH

The oath played a most important part in the whole tribal area of Albania and Montenegro. The tribes lived, till recent times, in a constant state of blood-feud both with each other and within the tribes, and this was regulated only by means of sworn intervals of peace. In Montenegro you were in "krv" (blood) or under oath ("pod vjere"). In Albania, in "gjak" (blood) or under "besa." The tribesman as a rule kept the oath when formally sworn with rigid fidelity. A man forsworn was universally condemned. How by means of such oaths blood-feuds were settled we have told in another chapter.

*Manner of Taking Oath.*—Among the Albanian tribes there still exists the very antique custom of swearing the oath upon a stone. The priest and the hodja have succeeded in adding respectively the cross and Allah to his oath, but to the priest's vexation the mountain man persistently says, as he throws down the stone in the circle of headmen, "Per guri i per kruch" (by the stone and the cross), and puts the stone first. When a Catholic tribesman had confessed and received absolution he liked to come to church next time carrying a stone in proportion to the size of the sins confessed. What pact he had sworn on the stone I could not understand. The stone in this case was said to represent penitence. Some priests forbade the practice; others said it was unnecessary, but allowed it because this visible sign of contrition seemed really to help them. "But," said Padre Kiri of Thethi, laughing, "when a man came with a rock on his shoulder I told him he might leave it at the door."

A reason suggested for this custom is that the penitent transferred his sin to the stone and so got rid of it.

In trials before the elders a man accused of crime would swear his innocence upon a stone and fling it down before his judges.

*Montenegro.*—I did not find the custom in Montenegro, but it was clearly common till recently. Prince Danilo, in his Code of 1855, decrees (Law 65): "If after this day a Montenegrin or Brdjanin present himself before justice with a stone tied to his neck, whether innocent or guilty he shall be flogged."

The custom, it appears, has been flogged out. But in spite of Danilo's floggings I still found the custom of throwing a stone with a curse on to the reputed grave of a bad man. On the western side of Montenegro are several stone piles, and many such are to be found in the Herzegovina, some of which have been excavated and proved to be prehistoric tumuli. Krsto firmly believed all such heaps to be "proklete gomile" (accursed heaps) over the body of a desperate criminal who



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had been stoned to death "many, many years ago." He never failed to add at least half a dozen stones and a multitude of curses to any heap we passed by the way.

Vuk Vrchevitch, in his book on old customs at minor religious festivals, collected in the Bocche di Cattaro, Montenegro, and the Herzegovina, mentions in a footnote that it was customary in the middle of the nineteenth century in Montenegro, when "a man made a statement and at once recognized he had made a mistake, to strike it on a stone (*u kamen udariti*). He scratched a stone with the nails of his right hand to transfer the error to the stone." As the author thought it necessary to explain this custom to Serbian readers, it is clear that the custom was a local one.

It is noteworthy that I can find no reference to swearing upon stones in old Serbian ballads, though swearing enough takes place in them.

That it is a custom of extreme antiquity there can be no doubt.

Lavrov (*v. Jirecek*) states that the Macedonian Slavs of old worshipped trees and stones. But tree- and pillar-worship is common to very many lands and existed in the Balkans long before the advent of the Slavs. Sir Arthur Evans describes the cult at Mycenæ and Dodona (*Journal of Hellenic Studies*, xxi). The oath on the stone may, therefore, belong to all and any of the Balkan people.

The Northern Slavs appear to have had some such oath. Helmoldus, in his *Chronica Slavorum* (c. 1160), tells that they "showed great reverence to their holy places, which were frequently sacred groves or springs, and would not lightly take an oath there, lest they should be overtaken by the wrath of the avenging god." When the church at Oldenburg was built and dedicated to St. John the Baptist in 1066 by the Saxons, "the Count bade the Slavs gather in the church to hear the Word of God . . . and the Slavs were restrained in future from *swearing by trees, fountains, and stones*; they were to bring those accused of crimes to the priest to be examined by the iron or the ploughshare" (c. 83). The steps taken by various races to "civilize" others are very interesting. Here the Saxons evidently consider the practice of ordeal by hot iron a more Christian method than that of swearing innocence upon an object believed to be sacred by the swearer.

Helmoldus's statement shows that this ordeal was not Slavonic. We must, therefore, suppose that the hot-iron ordeal, recommended in Stefan Dushan's Code (1349) as a means of testing serfs accused of crime, was borrowed from a neighbour land. Be this as it may, the ordeal was in use in South Slav districts till well into the nineteenth century.

Swearing on a stone has survived only in Albania as a means of self-justification; and it is not impossible that it has existed from

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pre-Slavonic times. One other trace maybe of holy trees and stones I saw in 1904 when riding through Albania, and never again.

My horse-boy picked up stones and thrust them in the forks of trees when we passed through a wood. To the horror of my companion, who was a colporteur of the British and Foreign Bible Society from South Albania, the boy declared he was doing so for the spirits of the dead to have something to tread on as they passed. Unfortunately the colporteur blamed him, and he would say no more about it. Hahn, in his Albanian studies, mentions this custom.

On this journey we passed two small woods where, I was told, no trees were ever cut because "a long while ago a church stood there." No one knew when. The "church" had probably been imagined, to account for the sanctity of the wood.

In Serbian tales and ballads the oaths are usually sworn by "God and St. John." Does St. John the Baptist represent a former oath on a holy spring? In Montenegro, SS. Petar Cetinski and Vasili of Ostrog were daily asked to bear witness to many dubious statements. No Montenegrin peasant can make a statement, whether true or false, without calling on God and one or other of his saints; and, alas! the old idea of the sanctity of an oath had evaporated and the statement was too often a lie.

Whereas I found the word of the Albanian tribesman reliable; but civilization may weaken his word, too.

Old King Nikola of Montenegro used to call Heaven to witness many remarkable statements. Once, when the Diplomatic Circle had been summoned to hear an unusually remarkable one, it is said that an astonished silence ensued, till one Minister Plenipotentiary, recovering his presence of mind, politely said: "Your Royal Highness is famed through Europe as . . . a poet."

*SECTION VIII*

SOME BALKAN TABOOS. IRON. HAIR

1. Propitiating the stranger.
2. The Name Taboo. Importance of the name.
3. The Food Taboo. Men will not eat with women.
4. Taboo on showing the face.
5. Iron. Degradation of the smith. Power of iron against spirits.
6. Hair. Beliefs and customs connected with it.



## SECTION VIII

### SOME BALKAN TABOOS. IRON. HAIR

#### I. PROPITIATING THE STRANGER

IN a land where magic is still practised it is not surprising to find some ancient taboos still alive.

Of the many things that mankind fears, the unknown is perhaps the most dreaded. Therefore in old days, when travellers were scarce, save on well-marked trade routes, the stranger was an object of great suspicion. Who could tell what evil spells he might work? Magic was then the great danger; to-day it is "politik," the mysterious power of secret diplomacy. The stranger is still suspect in lands much nearer home.

In those parts of the Balkans where the tribal system was still in force, the reluctance of the tribe to admit a stranger was still marked. Off the beaten track a guide was a necessity, not merely to show the way but to act as a passport and explain one. In many places the peasant believed firmly in hidden treasure, and every stranger was suspected of knowing the spell by which to acquire and run off with it. A reason for the stranger's presence is required.

Krsto Pejovitch, when I first went up-country with him, began to explain me so soon as we got off the highroad. He was showman, so to speak, and I was the monkey to his organ-grinding. On arrival at a han he would begin loudly: "She can read and write several languages. She can make pictures without a machine [i.e. draw]. She can sing. She can," etc. According to Krsto there were few things I could not do. Moreover, the Montenegrin proverb says: "Long hair, short wits, a woman's head," and as I wore my hair short, an uncommon thing in those days, the simple folk accepted the fact that my wits were necessarily long. Krsto would point this out, and add, in an aside, to bachelors: "She is not married, and God knows how rich."

When I protested, he declared this was the right way to conduct a tour, and he knew all about it. I had come to see real Montenegrin life—and I saw it. But so long as I live I shall feel for the luckless dancing bear who is prodded up to perform once more when dead tired, and remember the days when I could not make a note or a sketch except before a changing crowd as curious as monkeys, which flocked to see a woman who could not only write but write English. As often

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as not the schoolmaster picked up each sheet to examine as I finished it. How many times, when hoarse and exhausted, I have howled the "British Grenadiers," or some such ditty, only to have it rapturously encored!

In return I was crammed with food and drink.

One should never look a gift-horse in the mouth; but the suspicion with which a stranger is received, the endless questions that must be answered, and finally the lavish hospitality when it is decided to admit him, recall the fact that among primitive people it is necessary to propitiate the stranger, lest, offended, he should work evil to the house. By eating under the roof he acquires a temporary membership of the family. In the Albanian mountains, and, indeed, in the towns, I have been given hospitality with the words, "Buk i kryp i zemer i em" ("Bread and salt and my heart").

In Montenegro, rakia was the universal symbol of hospitality. When, after weeks of showing off my "parlour tricks," we returned to Krsto's house at Njegushi, he was triumphant. He confessed he had had grave doubts as to the propriety of a warrior going round the country as servant to a woman. But, managed in his manner, the tour had been a great success. I had, he said, made an excellent impression, and on one point only had offended. If he might say so, it was thought improper for an unmarried woman to imitate the manners of the officers. Greatly surprised, I asked what military action I had performed. He explained that in Montenegro all modest women blew their noses "like this"—here he performed loudly upon his own, with his fingers—whereas the officers who had been trained abroad used a handkerchief, and so my doing so was thought decidedly "fast." I conformed carefully to many a local custom, but in spite of Krsto's request I drew the line at "the finger trick."

Upon the journey he repeatedly affirmed that I had not come to search for treasure. At Pirlitor upon Durmitor, the legendary site of the castle of Voyvoda Momchilo, the belief in treasure was very strong. The local headmen followed me about the alleged ruins, though by nothing short of magic could I have moved the great stones. I purposely dropped my heavy pocket-knife, and the clank of metal on stone brought them up swiftly with the cry: "Has she found it?"

In Serbia, where I travelled without a guide, for I was raw to the Balkans at that time, I found the stranger taboo very strong. As I was ignorant of their politics, I merely thought they were crazy when they dogged me perpetually and went my way. When the powers in Belgrade ascertained, by means of countless cipher telegrams, that I was really a British subject and not a Karageorgevitch in disguise, as they had been foolish enough to suppose, then suddenly the hospitality phase

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began and I was propitiated on all sides. It was the thing to ask me into the nearest house and stuff me with food, and for days my hotel bills were almost nil. But that was in the days of the Obrenovitch, when the Karageorgevitchs had been exiled for ever and ever for having murdered Prince Michael. They now reign over wide lands for having murdered the Archduke Ferdinand.

We, too, have a stranger craze. We still hedge the stranger with difficulties until, or unless, we think fit to feast him at the Guildhall, hoping earnestly that by thus feeding the beast we may induce him to work magic in our favour with tariffs or arm his compatriots on our behalf.

### 2. THE NAME TABOO

Among many primitive races all the world over a man's name is part of himself. Just as spells to hurt a man may be wrought by means of bits of his hair or nails, so, too, can evil be worked by using his name. The name is, therefore, a thing to be carefully guarded. Thus is the name taboo explained by authorities on the subject.

The taboo is common in the Balkans. In 1904, among the Bulgars of Macedonia, I had to classify long lists of refugees. Woman after woman would give her name as "Maria," and refuse, with tears running down her cheeks, to give her husband's name, or any clue to her identity, save perhaps the name of her father in a distant village. "They are ashamed. You must not ask such a thing," I was told. I had asked an indecent question and hurt their feelings. "Ask another woman." The Maria in question would hurry from the room, while I learnt from a woman of the same village that the husband's name was Dmitri, son of George. This constantly happened when I have dealt with Bulgar and Albanian refugees. The explanation always is that they are "modest."

In Montenegro the custom was nearly dead—but not quite. Old folk still thought it improper for man and wife to name each other. The schoolmaster at Tzrmnitza told me that there were still many who had never done so. Savo Vuletitch, himself a Montenegrin, in one of his admirable tales of Montenegro, tells how "Petar Radisitch, though he had lived on the best of terms with his wife for full twenty years, had never called her by her name, nor even spoken to her as a human being, on any subject, if it were possible for a stranger to overhear. Had he to speak to her in public he muttered through his teeth, and she did the same by him. To have done otherwise would have been shameful."

A plan I found adopted was that the man gave his order in the



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third person without looking at his wife: "She is to bring coffee." Or turned his back and gave the order over his shoulder: "Bring coffee." If he had to mention his wife or present her, the older men still did so with a formal apology: "Da oprostish—moja zhena" ("If you will pardon me—my wife"). This I heard often enough. The mention of any female relative was avoided, and a man with daughters but no sons would emphatically declare he had no children. The girl child was made to feel her inferiority early. "A man feeds his son for himself, but his daughter for another man," she was told.

The name taboo till recently extended to other members of a household. The daughter-in-law, when brought to the family house, was not to call her new in-laws by their baptismal names.

"She dared not, for modesty," says Vuk Karadjitch. She addressed them all by nicknames which implied admiration or respect. Thus she called the elder brethren of the house Gospodin (sir), or Djever (brother-in-law), or even Ago (a great Aga). The younger more familiarly, as Sokolo (falcon), Miloshto (dear one), Zlatoye (golden one), or Krasni (the handsome). The elder women of the house were called Gospa (lady); the sisters-in-law Snasha, if they were the wives of the husband's brothers. If they were the unmarried sisters of the husband, who would all be very young in a land where girls are often married at fourteen, they were given fancy names, such as Lepotitza or Ubavitza (pretty little one), or Gospodjitza (little lady), or Golubitza (little dove). Beyond the family circle I found no trace of name taboo in Montenegro.

In the North Albanian mountains, however, in the Dukagin districts, it was decidedly unadvisable for a man's real name to be known. Especially in Shala, Shoshi, and Nikaj, I found it customary for men to adopt another name. It was a constant annoyance to the Franciscans that, though they baptized their flocks with good Albanian Christian names such as Kol (Nicholas), Gin (John), Ded (Dominic), or Pietr (Peter), the lads, on growing up, persisted in calling themselves by another name, preferably a Moslem one. They rigidly kept the fasts; they flocked to church on a feast day; according to their rather dim lights they fulfilled some, at least, of their religious duties. But they called themselves Hussein, or Ismail, or Mehmed, and no plea or threat of the priest could budge them. I was once asked by a Franciscan to express my horror of the practice to a whole party of men. I therefore said no one in England would believe they were Christians if they had such names. They did not like this and crossed themselves repeatedly in proof of their faith. But on this question they were obstinate. They did it "because they wished to," "because the names were beautiful" and, most convincing of all, "because we always do."



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The district was known to swarm with witches and, though none of them said so, similar customs in other lands make it probable that the nickname was intended to shield its owner's identity. How better than by taking a Moslem name?

A good example was my old friend, plucky old Mehmed Shpend of Shala, a well-known headman. It was incredible—nor did anyone pretend—that he had been baptized Mehmed the Raven. But when asked what his Christian name was he only grinned and twinkled, and said that "Mehmed Shpend" was "fort i bukur" ("very pretty").

A curious example of the belief that the Name is the Person occurred at Mount Athos at the beginning of this century. A Russian officer entered one of the monasteries as a monk. He was pious and much respected. Pondering over the sacred mysteries, it seemed fit to him that separate worship should be given to the Name of God. The idea found favour among some of the monks, and the cult of the name was instituted by them. The authorities at Athos forbade it, but the cult became more popular. It ended abruptly by the arrival of a Russian warship. The misguided monk was carried off and the heresy ended. The Russian Government, whether Tsarist or Bolshevik, stands no nonsense.

*The Importance of a Name.*—In Montenegro it was believed that the naming of a child may have an influence on its fate. It is customary for the same man to be christening "kum" (godfather) to all the children of one family. But if one child after another dies it is clear that the kum is unsuitable; and, in order to make sure this time that the kum is pleasing to God, the next infant is left in its cradle by the wayside. The mother hides close by. The first wayfarer who rashly stoops and looks at the infant is at once claimed as kum and must not refuse.

On the way up to Durmitor I saw a cradle all alone, and was about to investigate it when Krsto snatched hold of me, crying: "No! no! you will have to be kum!" He then halted and shouted out for the mother, saying that neither of us was going to be trapped into being kum. The mother came up laughing, with a sickle in her hand. She said she was merely cutting some grass and had brought the baby with her. It was already baptized; so we passed on safely. Being kum cost a deal of money and trouble. But we might have refused? "No," said Krsto decidedly; "if you are caught that is quite impossible."

Under such circumstances, and especially if the child is weakly, it is common to baptize it Zhivko (lively), or Vuk (wolf), or one of the many derivatives of Vuk—Vuksan, Vujadin, Vule, etc., or Dabizhiv (mayest thou live), in order to give strength.

The custom exists, too, in Serbia and Bosnia. In old days, in Montenegro, when the christening of children was part of the ceremony

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of ending a blood-feud, it was usual to delay baptism for two or three years so as to have children ready in case of need. The child meanwhile was known by a nickname which often stuck to him for life and became a recognized name. Such, it was said, was the origin of such names as Predrag (very dear); Mrko, or Mirko (dark); Mrgud (sulky); Plavo (fair), etc. Some names derive from personal habits: Krivokapitch (son of a crooked cap), an heroic bratstvo of the Tzutzi tribe; Pletikos (plaited hair), indicating an ancestor with a fine pigtail; Delibashovitch and Haydukovitch (son of a brigand leader), etc.

But how far such names were adopted with a view to concealing another name it is at this date impossible to say.

### 3. THE FOOD TABOO

The pig is, of course, taboo among the Moslems. I never saw an instance of this being broken. On the contrary, careful inquiry was always made about unknown dishes. The Montenegrins, therefore, regard the pig as peculiarly Christian. Roast pig is a special dish both at Easter and Christmas.

Very good it was, too, when stuck with sweet herbs and roasted under an iron cover on the hearth. I remember eating hot sucking-pig, smothered in cream, at one o'clock in the morning to celebrate the dawn of Easter Day at Sophia Petrovna's school at Cetinje, with all the girls and many of the members of the Russian Legation. We had just come from the chapel after crying triumphantly "Christ is risen." All save myself had abstained from flesh and fat many days. And they fell on that pig!

That pre-eminently Orthodox country, Serbia, is pre-eminent also for pigs. In Macedonia, too, a drove of pigs showed a village to be Christian, though my poor guide, a Macedonian Bulgar, did not quite express what he meant when he said sadly: "Ici seulement les cochons sont Chrétiens."

Among the Catholics of Albania and Dalmatia the land tortoise is thought very good eating. It does, in fact, make a very palatable stew and is more meaty than one would think. But the Orthodox regard it with horror. Krsto repeatedly told me that none but a "Latinski" would eat anything so filthy.

Neither Serb nor Albanian will eat frogs, though the ponds swarm with fat ones and the people are hungry.

Catholics, Orthodox, and Moslems all regarded the eating of horse-flesh as most unclean. The report that it was sold as an article of food in Italy caused that country to be called an accursed and unclean place.

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The Abbé Fortis, in his *Journey in Dalmatia*, 1776, notes that the Morlachs seldom or never eat veal, and states that it is an ancient prohibition, quoting St. Hieronimus contra Jovin: "In nostra provincia scelus putant Vitulos devorare." Marnovitch, a Bosnian, writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, says that the Dalmatians, "who have not been infected with foreign vices, think veal an unclean flesh." That it was so considered by many of the Slavs is shown by the fact that one reason why the Russians (1607) suspected the false Demetrius of being an impostor was that "in his diet he would ordinarily eat calves' flesh, which is held an abomination among them" (*The Russian Impostor*, London, 1674).

I never heard veal prohibited in Montenegro, but certainly never came across it in a native house. But this may not be the result of a taboo so much as the fact that the grown animal is so valuable for draught purposes and for milk that it is not slaughtered till fit for nothing else. The beef, as hard as your boot, is a thing to avoid. It was very funny to see the British Navy, when they occupied Scutari, trying to make roast beef out of dead Scutari ox. They had an erroneous idea that the local mutton was unwholesome, and when draught ox failed, ate tinned stuff from the ships.

An interesting question arises from food taboos. It would appear that the beast tabooed by one race is the favourite diet of their enemy next door. Thus veal, we are told, was tabooed by the South Slav, and pig is tabooed by the Turk and Jew. The two most popular meats of Vienna are pork and veal. Mutton, they will tell you, is uneatable. The South Slav eats pork with great gusto and makes it his Christmas, and often Easter, dish as something peculiarly Christian, abhorred by both Jew and Turk.

Abbé Fortis mentions also of the Morlachs that the man apologizes for his wife in the words "Da oprostish" ("Mayest thou excuse"), and that women never eat at the table with the men. I found this custom strong in Montenegro. Only in the towns among the *intelligentsia* did men and women ate together. Even in the houses of the old Voyvodas up-country the wife and daughters stood humbly round the table, fetching and carrying, and not daring to sit down for a moment. They retired to another room when the males had finished, and ate up what was left in company with the children. When, after a good deal of discussion, it was decided to rank me as a man, and I ate at the male table, women often would refuse to eat with me, saying that it would be shameful ("sramotno"), and that their modesty ("stid") prevented them. Krsto, who, of course, ate with the men, used to give himself great airs to the women in the houses we visited. He thrust out his hand for them humbly to kiss on arrival, and shouted his orders rudely



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to them. Any women sitting by the roadside when a man passed at once arose and gave humble greeting. Krsto always was very lordly on these occasions. He always ate with me—partly, I think, to convince himself he was not my servant but my equal. Poor Iké fed apart afterwards. Once when he was absent a week I begged her to feed with me, for it was ridiculous to make two meals of it. But the mere idea of doing anything so unseemly distressed her so that she burst into tears and prayed me to excuse her. She said it was a thing that could not be done; it would “shame” me.

For a man to wait on a woman was very humiliating. A mounted gendarme, a Bosnian Moslem, was once ordered to escort me in Turkish territory. He had conscientious scruples about obeying a woman. After a midday halt at a “kavana,” he hurried down to get the horses ready, leaving his rifle on the balcony. Presently he shouted up to no one in particular, “Give me my rifle.” As it was alongside of me I handed it down. His ruse had succeeded, and he cried with childish glee, “She has waited on me! she has waited on me!” Honour was satisfied.

Among the Albanian tribesmen it was considered very degrading to eat with a woman. I remember how a Kastrati man jeered at the Austrian Consul. A poor creature, indeed. He drank coffee and ate meat and bread, and let his wife eat at the same time. A shameless woman! A despicable man. The Kastrati man would not let his wife so misbehave. He would never eat with a woman, not he.

It is amusing how often ambassadors, generals, admirals, ministers, and other exalted beings are looked down on with contempt by the native whose respect and admiration they fondly imagine they are arousing.

When I arrived at Vuthaj, a Moslem Albanian village, where they had never before entertained a strange female, there was a very long powwow as to the correct course to pursue. I had gone there on the invitation of a headman. It was decided that I was too important a guest to feed with the harem. I was to rank as a man and feed with the chiefs. But in order to comply with their sense of fitness I was helped last of all, even after my horse-boy. And so honour was satisfied. The women waited at table—unveiled—but I did not enter their apartment and had no communication with them.

Among the Christian Mirdites at the house of the Kapetan, where I was treated with great honour, the younger men of the family waited at table, as did Chaucer’s Squire, and no woman was allowed to come near me at all. I heard a giggling crowd trying to get a peep at me through the crack of the door, but they were chivied away by a male, and my suggestion that I should see them was met by the statement that they were too modest.



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Both the name and the food taboos being even to-day so common in the Balkans, it is strange to find Herodotus, so many centuries ago, mentioning both as peculiar customs of the Ionians and explaining them thus: "Even those who esteemed themselves the most noble of the Ionians on first settling in the country brought no wives, but married a number of Carian women whose husbands they put to death. In consequence of this violence the women made a compact which they delivered to their daughters never to sit at meals with their husbands nor to call them by their appropriate names" (Bk. I, c. xlvi). He, however, expressly states that these Ionians were of very mixed origin, saying that: "Molossians, Pelasgians of Arcadia, and Dorians of Epidaurus were mingled with them." These are some of the oldest known Balkan tribes. The Molossians especially were in South Albania. The food and name taboos were thus possibly brought from the Balkans to Asia by the men. Judging by the present Balkan peoples, it is far more likely that the customs should have been enforced by them on their captured wives than that Herodotus's explanation should be correct.

### 4. TABOO ON SHOWING THE FACE

The amount of veiling done by the women varies very considerably among the Balkan peoples, I know. The most closely veiled and hooded of all were the Moslem Slavs of Mostar and Serajevo. The Moslem Slav, whether called Serb or Croat, is a very strict Mohammedan.

This may be because the Bosnians and Herzegovinians—the Bosnians more especially—adopted Islam in many cases as early as the fifteenth century, whereas the Albanians, upon whom it sits far more lightly, and a very large number of whom belong to the heretical Bektashi sect, became Mohammedan mainly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and some in the nineteenth. The women of the Moslem Albanian mountain tribes are never veiled, and will come to market and bargain freely with any man, their faces more exposed than those of many Christians.

In the towns, which were under the rule of Turkish officials whose womenfolk possibly set the fashions, the Albanian Moslem women were all more or less closely veiled. In Dulcigno they almost exceeded the hooding of Mostar, and have preserved the custom under the rule of the Montenegrin, which was forced upon them by the pious efforts of Mr. Gladstone.

The veiling of women was, however, not unknown in Ancient Greece, and the veiling or partial veiling of both men and women was practised in various primitive and non-Moslem lands. The usual explanation of

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male jealousy is quite insufficient; for, in fact, the veiled Moslem woman can "carry on" incognito with far more ease than can her unveiled and recognizable Christian sister. Nor, at any rate, in the lands we are considering, is the Christian husband a whit less jealous than the Moslem. All Christian Scutari was once in a hubbub over the scandalous and shocking conduct of the Austrian doctor and Italian Consul-General. These two gentlemen had publicly exchanged wives on the Consular lawn-tennis court, and these shameless women had each played against her own husband.

I was seriously consulted and failed to convince the disgusted Scutarenes that the proceeding was harmless. How could you tell where it would end?

When I first went to Scutari, in 1901, all the Catholic married women wore a long lace veil pinned across the lower part of the face and draped over the head. Unmarried Catholic girls still, I believe, shroud their heads entirely in a thick cotton wrapper, leaving only a peep-hole.

Most of the Orthodox peasants of Macedonia, both Bulgar and Greek, wore a large handkerchief folded into a triangle over their heads and arranged the two long corners across the mouth and tucked them in securely on either side. The mouth was very often thus covered, too, by Montenegrin maidens; and by Christian women in Bosnia.

Sir James George Frazer states, giving many examples, that the covering of the mouth is connected with the belief that the soul may escape by it or evil spirits enter by it, and that complete veiling is probably a protection also from the Evil Eye.

That the mouth is the important spot is shown by the Moslem girls of Bosnia, who, when caught unveiled at a well, or on the hill-side with their flocks, will sometimes seize a handkerchief hastily between their teeth and then seem to think themselves sufficiently protected.

Now evil eyes and bad spirits swarm in the Balkans; and the soul always escapes by the nose or mouth. "My soul was in my nose all the time!" cries the Montenegrin when telling of an escape from danger.

"That brought your soul into your nose!" said the horse-boy when my horse nearly came down with me. The tying of a handkerchief over the holes through which it might escape is a very reasonable precaution.

Women who do not protect themselves with a veil, deck themselves and their children with a mass of beads and dingle-dangles. These things are to act as it were as lightning-conductors to attract the glance of the Evil Eye and save their persons from it. The veiled and hooded woman wears no ornament outside her outdoor garment.

The bride, both Catholic and Moslem, is veiled from head to foot.





PLATE XI.—MOSLEM ALBANIAN WOMAN, DULCIGNO (1907)



## *Some Balkan Taboos. Iron. Hair*

The Catholic thus goes safely to church and there the veil is raised. Evil spirits are powerless there; and as we have seen, when she leaves the sacred building she is carefully veiled and conveyed safely to her future home. Food and drink are given her by her attendants behind the veil; all possible precautions are taken, in fact, to prevent her soul escaping and harmful glances falling on her.

In early days in Montenegro the brides were so closely veiled when fetched from home by the *svatovi* that in the Martinovitch family, of Baitza near Cetinje, there is a tradition of a bride being accidentally exchanged for the bride of another wedding-party.

Two parties of *svatovi* started from Baitza to fetch brides from afar, and had to pass the night on the mountain-side. They met at the same wayside spring and encamped. The two girls begged to be allowed to sleep together. Next morning each party rode off with the wrong girl. The weddings were celebrated at once on arrival, and as no one had previously seen the girls and they, as was customary, knew nothing about their future bridegrooms, the mistake was not detected till a week after, when the girls' relatives came to pay the first visit to them. They were then infuriated to find that the carefully planned alliances had gone wrong and they had not acquired the "in-laws" they had intended. The respective bridegrooms expressed themselves quite satisfied. Not so the parents of brides. A violent quarrel took place. Blows were exchanged and a blood-feud was imminent. The annulment of the weddings was demanded, and peace was only restored by the metropolitan, who declared the marriages legal and the whole complication evidently the will of God, Who must be obeyed.

All Balkan people, so far as my experience goes, sleep with the head covered, no matter how hot it may be.

I remember a suffocating night in a wretched cottage at Bratonozhitch, Montenegro. I lay on a bench on one side of the hut, and the floor was covered by some sixteen persons of both sexes. So hot was it that the men stripped their shirts and slept in their breeches; but all buried their heads under thick, felt-like blankets.

Often have I been awakened from a much-needed midday sleep under a tree by a choking, horrible smell, and have found that some kindly creature while I slept had covered my head with a filthy towel or coat. Poor old Marko perpetually told me it was most unhealthy to sleep with an uncovered head. By way of warning he told me the horrible end of a neighbour of ours. He not only left his head uncovered, but he slept near an open window. The wind blew into his head and went round and round inside it, and the unhappy man, driven distracted, hanged himself in the vineyard.

A possible further reason for shrouding the head is the strange

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belief described in the section on Balkan Remedies that life depends on a worm that lives in the ear. The ear in this case would be a great danger-spot.

A very large proportion of the Albanian mountain men, especially in the Maltsia e Madhe, completely shroud the head in a long strip of cotton and wear it even in the hottest weather. That it is not needed as protection from the sun is shown by the townsmen wearing only a small fez.

Blunt, in his *Voyage into the Levant* (1650), gives a quaint tale about the origin of head-wrapping: "At last we came to an high and large mountain of a day's journey over. The Jew held it to be Thermopylæ. . . . Herewith he told me that the Easterne custome of wearing Turbantes came from thence and that how once the Barbarous people having the Grecian Army at a great advantage there was no other remedy but that some few should make good that narrow passage. . . . There were some brave Spirits who undertooke it, and knowing they went to an inevitable death they took care of nothing but sepulture, which of old was much regarded; wherefore each carreyed his winding sheet wrapped around his head and then with the loss of their own lives saved their fellowes: whereupon for an honourable memorial of that exploit the Levantines used to wrap white Linnen about their heads and the fashion so derived upon the Turke." Thus in 1650 there was a tradition of pre-Turkish head-wraps.

Head-wraps are commonly worn by many men of the East and of the Mediterranean coast of Africa. Some—the Tuaregs—cover the whole face. It is not unlikely that in the past head-wraps and veils were to protect the ear as well as the mouth and nose. That the ear is a danger-spot is shown by the numerous earrings worn to protect it from the Evil Eye, and the dingle-dangles hanging over the ear from the cap.

### 5. IRON

The Balkans within historic times have not been the centre of production or invention. Neither the Slav, who destroyed the civilization Rome had begun to implant, nor the Turk, who in turn conquered him, added anything of value to the world's store of resources. Both inherited a good deal from Byzantium, but originated nothing.

But in prehistoric times Bosnia was one of the great centres of the iron trade, and probably one of the very early ones. Iron ore in an easily smelted form, and great forests side by side, together with their own brains and energy, enabled these unknown people, some six or eight centuries before our era, to develop and spread the use of the

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new metal and so give an impulse to the vast iron industry upon which the whole of our present material civilization is based. But into this prehistory we cannot now enter. The epoch-making discoveries of the Austrian experts attached to the Serajevo Museum require a volume to themselves, and can be studied in the volumes of the *Wissenschaftliche Mittheilungen aus Bosnien und der Hercegovina*. In his *Voyage en Bosnie*, 1807-1808, Chaumette-des-Fossés says: "The mines which abound in this country would become under another government an inexhaustible source of wealth. . . . That which has always contributed to the wealth of Bosnia and, at the present time, has become its principal branch of industry are the numerous iron mines. The most considerable are near Foinitz and Cressevo. They employ more than two thousand workers, of whom one-third are Catholics and the rest gipsies." According to this report the Orthodox Serbs did not work in the mines.

Iron being such a very ancient Balkan industry, it is strange to find that the bulk of the Balkan populations still consider iron-working as most degrading. When I travelled, the tide of foreign blue-enamelled ironware was only beginning to set in, and iron was still worked almost entirely by gipsies a-squat in ramshackle sheds on the outskirts of the towns of Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Albania, who, with most primitive anvil, hammer, and bellows, forged the horseshoes, hobbles, chains, ploughshares, fish-tridents, dentistry forceps, nails, and hooks commonly used by the peasants. Everyone bought their ware, and everyone looked on the gipsy as beneath contempt.

Respectable people, both Serb and Albanian, could make copper pots or cut up old petroleum canisters and fashion tin pots and other articles of them. No one who valued his reputation could hammer iron.

In 1907 I was Commissioner for Montenegro at the Balkan States Exhibition at Earl's Court, and took the Montenegrins who then came over for their first walk to see the shops. None of them had ever left their native land before. We stopped outside a large hardware shop in the Brompton Road, and the two men examined every tool and pot in the window. They then glanced inside. I shall never forget their contempt when they saw that the men behind the counter were not, as they expected, "tsrni tzigani" (black gipsies) but English.

"What!" cried the elder in horror, "Englishmen making and selling iron things!" He thought, of course, they made the goods they were selling. "I had rather see my son dead than see him sink so low as this! The English! By God, they are no better than Black Gipsies."

And, until we arrived at Whitehall and saw the Horse Guards, nothing would make him modify his opinion that the English were a "pogan



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narod" (unclean or depraved race). The gorgeous uniform of the Guards cheered him, and he asked if it were possible to enlist in the regiment and if the pay were good. But to the end of his stay he never forgot those Englishmen who sold iron pots. He left with the poorest idea of England and the English, and when I met him four years afterwards, as a gendarme at Podgoritza, he again referred with disgust to this unpleasant British habit.

But the name Kovatchevitch (son of a smith) is sufficiently common among persons who do not appear to be of gipsy origin.

As the working of iron was highly developed by the pre-Slav inhabitants of the Balkans, it is possible that it remained in their hands after the Slav invasion and was looked on as especially the task for the vanquished.

The smith in mediæval days had none too safe a position, if we may judge by the way the Serb hero, Marko Kraljevitch, treated Novak the Smith (Vuk Karadjitch, *Narodne Pesme*, vol. ii, Marko i Musa Kesedjija):—

"Marko hied him to Novak the Smith. 'Forge me a sword, O Novak, such as never before thou hast forged!' And Marko gave him thirty ducats and rode away to the new wineshop. For three or four days drank he wine and back went he then to Novak.

"'Hast forged me the sword, O Novak?' And Novak brought him the sword and said softly: 'Here are the sword and the anvil. See what a sword it is!' Marko swung up the sword in his right hand and struck it upon the anvil and cleft the anvil in twain, saying: 'So help thee God, Novak the Smith, hast ever forged a better?'

"And Novak answered: 'So help me God, Kraljevitch Marko, a better one have I forged, and for a better warrior. Such a sword forged I for Musa the Albanian that when he struck it upon the anvil not a scrap of the anvil was left whole.'

"Then was Marko angered. 'Hold out thy hand, Novak,' cried he, 'that I may pay thee for the sword.'

"Then Novak betrayed himself. The serpent bit him" (i.e. misfortune seized him). "He thrust out his right hand. Marko swung his sword and smote off his arm at the shoulder. 'Look thee now, Novak, thou shalt never forge a better nor a worse! Here are a hundred ducats to keep thee the rest of thy life!' And he mounted his horse and rode away."

When Marko Kraljevitch lived, at the end of the fourteenth century, the Serb Empire of Dushan was falling to pieces. The Albanians were shaking off Serb rule. Musa was the famous Albanian chieftain whose name survives in the Musakija, the plain lands in South Albania. Novak the Smith clearly sympathized rather with Musa than with



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the Serb chieftain. Maybe Novak was by race one of the "under-dogs" of the old Serb Empire—a serf or slave.

In a Montenegrin ballad, dictated to me by Krsto and which I do not know in print, the smith again appears as low caste. Milosh of Drobniak bids his sister take his brown horse to be shod by Suljo the Gipsy. Suljo refuses to do so unless he may kiss her. Milosh rides away on the unshod horse, and on his return rode to Suljo's. "When Suljo saw him he was afeared. He took his cap in his left hand, and in his right, the hammer and tongs to shoe Milosh's brown horse. But Milosh smote the gipsy with his sword. Though he struck him but lightly, he cleft him in twain. And thus spoke Milosh: 'Well, Suljo! Dost wish to kiss my sister now?' "

The smith was low class and of another race.

How different from these benighted ideas are those of our higher civilization. It is universally recognized that the making and selling of machines for killing the people over the border is the most honourable of trades. Far from being classed as a Black Gipsy, the armament dealer receives a title, and can marry anybody's daughter.

But a fear or dislike of iron has been widespread. When one considers its great usefulness and the ages it has been in use, it is incomprehensible that the idea it was uncanny should have been so persistent. No iron tool, we are told, was used in building the Temple at Jerusalem. Iron might not be used to repair the Pons Sublicius at Rome. Roman priests had to shave with bronze, not iron razors. The uncanny properties of magnetic iron and the rooted dislike of the human race for innovations are not enough to account for it; and it appears that this dread of iron was transferred to the workers of it and long clung to them.

I found the uncanny power of iron still recognized in the Balkans. Iron drives off evil spirits. When I was living in Montenegro many a "junak" (hero) who boasted freely of his courage did not like passing a graveyard at night. That cheeriest of boasters, Krsto, was hurt when I told him such fear was not compatible with "junashtvo." If obliged to pass such places after dark he thought it indispensable to carry a knife. This was not meant for stabbing the ghost. Oh, no! He would have run away at its first appearance. It was to keep the ghost off. In fact, the necessary piece of iron. One would have thought the revolver every man carried had iron enough to frighten any ghost. Not at all. A knife it must be. This, no doubt, because the belief dates from many centuries before the invention of fire-arms, to the days when a knife was the handiest piece of portable iron; and ever since then it has remained the recognized protector.

In North Albania a shovel or hoe was always left in a grave until

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the body was laid in it, in order to prevent any devil lurking there to seize the dead.

I remember waiting by the tiny grave dug for a child at Thethi Shala in the graveyard. Someone tripped over the long protruding handle of the shovel and dislodged it. The old gravedigger dashed forward and replaced it at once, and drew it out only as the little corpse was lowered. The Franciscan, an Albanian, who stood by the graveside, acquiesced. "It is the custom," he said when questioned. Possibly, like the rest of us, he could not keep demons at bay unaided.

Iron keeps off all spirits, good and bad, it appears; for no knife must touch the fowl's breast-bone or sheep's blade-bone in which the Albanian and Montenegrin soothsayers read the future. No one can tell you why; but everyone knows it would be the height of folly to try to read a bone that has been cleaned with a knife—it would not tell the truth.

Colonel Aubrey Herbert, that friend of the Turks and Albanians, whose untimely death has left an unfillable gap, gave me a curious instance of the belief in the magic of iron. During the Balkan war of 1913 the Turkish general, Djavid Pasha, retreated with what was left of his army into South Albania, where "he occupied the house of a friend of mine. The tide of war was running fiercely against the Turks and the general wanted to consult the spirits. The family carpenter was ordered to make a three-legged table without any nails in it—'for the spirits hate metal,' said Djavid. The young Turks invoked the spirit of Nazim Pasha, who had been shot by Enver and his friends. . . . When no answer came, the absent ghost of Nazim was cursed for refusing to give information."

Even the absence of iron could not induce the spirit of the murdered man to advise his murderers.

### 6. HAIR. SOME BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS CONNECTED WITH IT

In many lands much mystery surrounds hair, that strange substance that grows continually from youth to age; which is part of the person, but can be cut off without pain and is, therefore, the most convenient substitute or symbol for the whole person.

By means of hair spells can be wrought even in an electric-lighted European capital. Draga Mashin, the mistress of the luckless young King Alexander Obrenovitch, forced him to marry her and make her queen by clipping some of her hair in little bits and mixing it with appropriate spells in his food. Having thus eaten a portion of her, he was hopelessly in her power. At least, so we were assured by one of

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the Serbian *intelligentsia*, formerly Minister at the Court of St. James's. Possibly the belief that Draga dabbled in witchcraft was one reason why the populace cheerfully acquiesced in her murder. Near-Eastern politics are more often swayed by old-world beliefs than some folk are aware of.

By chance one night in Krsto's hut I learnt that the ancient rite of dedication by hair is part of the Orthodox baptismal ceremony. I was showing my folding pair of nail-scissors when Pope Gjuro exclaimed in admiration that they were just the thing for clipping hair at baptisms. Old Gjuro himself, of course, wore a beard, and his unclipped locks flowed on his shoulders. Hair, as we have seen, can be used to work grievous harm. "The simplest way of avoiding this peril," says Sir James George Frazer, "is not to cut the hair at all." Samson's strength lay in his hair. Kings, medicine-men, and others who were very holy, have gone unshorn, and so to this day do the priests of the Orthodox Church, the direct descendants of the priests of pre-Christian cults. Firmicus (Julius Maternus) wrote the *Errors of Religion* about A.D. 350, and described "men who stay in temples in an unkempt state, and walk abroad thus and never cut their hair, and who would announce something to men as if said by gods." Firmicus was a Sicilian and had, doubtless, been taught by Rome, for he did not connect holiness with hairiness as did Byzantium.

One of the many bitter complaints brought against the Church of Rome by Michael Cerularius, Patriarch of Byzantium (1043-58), was that Latin clerks shave the beard. So abhorrent did this practice seem to the Byzantine that he refused the Communion to shaven clerks. Thus a deep-rooted belief in the magic power of hair was one of the several odd reasons which helped to split the Church and ultimately affect the fate of Europe.

Rome, not given to haggling over unimportant details, did not and does not object to moustachioed and bearded priests should local custom prefer them. The Orthodox Church makes no exceptions. In the more civilized lands the Orthodox pope now likes to twist his locks into a "bun" pinned up under his high hat when he is not officiating. But up-country I have seen strange popes whose tangled black locks streamed in the wind, and whose faces were muffled to the eyes in beard that had never been profaned by steel: wild men of the mountains with knife and revolver in belt.

Hair-cutting as a dedication of the person is an old Balkan rite. Daremburg and Saglio, in the *Dictionnaire d'Antiquités*, figure a marble slab found in Thessaly, on which are carven two neat pigtails, "offered to Poseidon by the sons of Dumachos," says the inscription. In a storm hair would thus be cut off and thrown overboard with the hope that



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Poseidon would kindly accept it as substitute for the body. In this case evidently he did so.

The Orthodox Church, too, dedicates the child, after immersion and unction, by "clipping off four locks of hair as sign of the Cross, the pope saying: 'The servant of God is shorn in the name of God.' The pieces of hair are mixed with some wax from the candle and dropped into the font by the child's father" (Romanoff, *Rites and Customs of the Greco-Roman Church*). The hair, no doubt, is dropped into the holy water to save it from being used for spells by some wicked person.

My friend Mr. Stroud Read, who has lived much in Greece, tells me that there is a tendency there now to omit the hair-cutting from baptism, the pope sometimes refusing to have it done in church, but that it is done, nevertheless, by the laity at home after returning from the church. Someone is invited to be hair-cutter, and the clippings are dropped into a pan of hot charcoal.

The two ceremonies were formerly separate ones in Montenegro. Pope Gjuro told me there used to be two kumstvos (sponsorships): Shishano Kumstvo (shearing kumstvo), and Mokro (wet) or Krsteno Kumstvo (baptism). The former, as a separate kumstvo, is now extinct. It used to carry with it spiritual relationship and prevent the intermarriage of the direct descendants of the sponsor and those of the child's father for several generations. The marriage circle was thus further restricted and drove folk farther afield in search of a wife. Medakovitch, describing the ceremony as done by the laity between 1840 and 1850, says it was done some time after baptism. Three locks were cut in the name of the Trinity and thrown on the dunghill. At that time the ceremony did not form an obstacle to marriage.

About three years after my nail-scissors had become an ecclesiastical implement I learnt in the Albanian mountains what is probably the most complete form in which the ceremony now survives. It is performed habitually by both Moslems and Christians. The Catholic priests try to suppress this pagan practice, which, nevertheless, their flock considers quite as important as baptism and even more so. A careful study of those pagan practices adopted by one Church and abhorred by the other might throw light on the centres or origin of such practices.

In North Albania the "kumpare i floksh" (sponsor of hair) is chosen when the child is about two years old. He is a man with whom the head of the house wishes to be related. The family being assembled out of doors, the kumpare (conpatrem, compère) sits down on the ground, and first takes another child on his knees to ensure that his "hair child" shall not be the last his parents have. He then takes his "hair child," whose hair as yet has never been cut, and snips off four locks of hair



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to the four quarters of the heavens—north, south, east, and west. These locks are at once destroyed. Handsome gifts are then exchanged, the kumpare giving sometimes as much as two or three gold napoleons, and receiving some embroidered garments or the elaborately patterned knitted socks which are favourite ceremonial gifts. A great feast, of course, follows. The child's father and the kumpare are now brothers, and their children are not intermarriageable till the seventh degree. In olden days I was assured they were never intermarriageable, and ranked exactly as consanguines. Near Scutari this prohibition had lapsed altogether. Among the Pulati and Dukagini it was still believed in. At Thethi Shala in 1908 a man rushed into the church to stop a marriage on the ground that the parties were cousins by hair-cutting. The Franciscan who was officiating refused to recognize the impediment and married the couple. Whereupon the outraged tribesman ran hot-foot to the Bishop of Pulati and denounced the Franciscan for having celebrated an incestuous marriage. The bishop refused to listen to him. He and his friends then hastened to Scutari, and begged the Turkish Vali to denounce the marriage. The Vali said he did not care whom the Christians married. The bridegroom belonged to a very strong house and so was not molested, and the matter dropped.

The Moslems cut but three locks of hair because four makes a cross, whereas a triangle is a popular Moslem pattern (*v. Tattoos*). But the Montenegrin, as we have seen, cut three for the Holy Trinity.

The clipping of the four locks out of doors to the four quarters of the heavens has all the appearance of being a dedication to the sun. Sun-worship, as we have seen, was widely spread in the Balkans. When we find this ceremony considered of high importance in the very district where sun and moon symbols are still commonly carved and tattooed, we are tempted to connect them. That the rite is ancient and pre-Christian cannot be doubted.

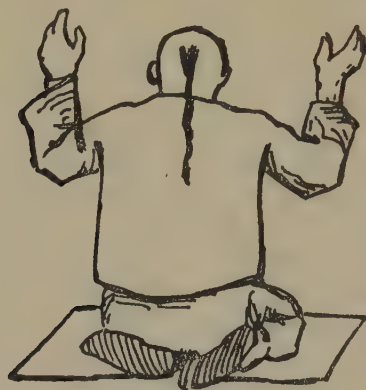
The Catholic Church strives to suppress the notion of "hair-cutting incest." The Orthodox Church, by admitting hair-cutting as part of the baptismal ceremonial, has perpetuated it; for baptismal godfatherhood prohibits the marriage of descendants of either party till the seventh degree. "Hair-cutting incest," therefore, prohibits marriage between the descendants of the Duke of York and the Karageorgevitch, for the papers were careful to inform us that locks of hair were duly clipped when the Duke and Duchess of York acted as godparents to the heir to the Serbian throne. Their Royal Highnesses took part in a pagan ceremony of unknown antiquity. You can never tell what a Balkan alliance will let you in for.

The hair-cutting in the Russian baptism is probably an importation from Byzantium, as is also the unshorn priest. A deacon, on ordination,

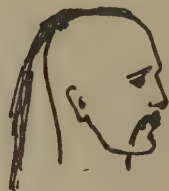
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is shorn of four locks, but after becoming a holy man he goes unshorn. The most wonderful I met was a young monk at Zdrebanik Monastery, Montenegro, whose well-combed flaxen hair fell to below his waist. His beard was equally fine. I remember, too, two "kalugers" whom we met on the Nikshitch road. They carried begging bowls and offered holy pictures for sale. They spoke no tongue anyone could understand, but their immense coal-black manes and beards showed them, as Krsto remarked, to be undoubtedly exceptionally holy.

Hair is also offered, as we have seen in the chapter on funerals, on graves. In Bosnia and the Herzegovina I saw tresses of hair hung along with rags, oranges, bread, etc., on the young tree or branch stuck at the head of most graves. In a lonely graveyard between Gorazhda and Chajnitza (1906) I saw what must have been some



PRAYING BOSNIAN CATHOLIC,  
JAITZA, 1907



SKETCH SHOWING THE  
PIGTAIL (PERCHIN)

FIG. 21

mourning woman's whole head of hair, waving and bleaching in the sun and wind from the head-post of a grave. Here the hair seems part of a purificatory rite.

The Eastern belief in the magic of hair is shown in the book of Numbers vi. *et seq.*: "When a man or woman shall make a special vow to separate himself unto the Lord . . . all the days of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head . . . he shall be holy, he shall let the locks of his hair grow long. . . . All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall not come near to a dead body. . . . And if any man die very suddenly beside him and he defile the head of his separation, then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing. On the seventh day shall he shave it." St. Paul (Acts xxi. 26) observed this ceremony.

In Bosnia, Serbia, and Montenegro, till very recently, most men

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wore the head shaven except for one long "perchin" (plaited pigtail). It was still worn commonly in Bosnia in 1906. The Catholics at Jaitze unrolled their head-wraps at the church door and went in looking singularly Chinese, with the long perchin which had been coiled under the wrap hanging down. Lady Strangford in 1866 describes the men of Sebenico in Dalmatia as wearing pigtails to the waist decorated with tassels and ornaments.

A marvellous fine one must have been worn by the Hayduk near Zara, who is famous in ballads as Pletikosé Pavlo (Paul of the plaited hair).

King Nikola as a boy, I was told, wore the perchin.

Head-shaving was usual all through the Near East. Dr. Brown, in his *Travels* in 1669, describes various head-shaves at Larissa: "The Barber would handsomely perform his work, trimming each man according to the fashion of his country.

"The Greeks have a place the size of a dollar left bare on the crown of the head, then let the hair grow round it the breadth of two fingers more or less, after which they shave the rest of the head and wear it bare.

"The Croatian hath one side of his head shorn, and the other neither cut nor shorn, but lets the hair grow as long as it will. The Hungarian shaves the whole head except the foretop. The Turk shaves the whole except the lock on his crown. The Franks shave not the head, but wear the hair as long as with us. The Greek priests neither shave nor cut the hair, but wear it so long as it will grow."

In the interesting frescoes in the old Serbian church at Grachanitzza, St. Sava, first Metropolitan of Serbia, is depicted with a large tonsure, showing that, though the Serbs were in communion with the Eastern Orthodox Church, they did not adopt the fashion of the unshorn priest till a later date. Sava, though tonsured, wears a long beard. Serbia swayed irresolute for some time between the two Churches. Sava's father, Stefan Nemanya, Prince of Serbia, and the Serbian Synod of 1119 had declared "the most holy Roman Church the mother of all Churches." And in 1218, when Sava was made head of the Serbian Church, the Latins held Constantinople, and the Patriarch of Byzantium was in exile at Nicea.

The importance of beards is shown in Stefan Dushan's Canon, Law 97: "He who tears out the beard of a Vlastelin, or of a man of standing among the Serfs, shall have both hands cut off."

The Serbar (serf) in certain cases could be sentenced, in addition to flogging, to having his hair and beard burnt off as ultimate degradation.

John of Ephesus, writing about A.D. 584, gives an amusing threat of hair-cutting. He tells of the coming of the Avars, in the time of "the Emperor Justinian, who received their ambassadors with great

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honour, and made them rich presents of gold and silver dresses, and girdles and saddles decked with gold. . . . As often as they sent, so often did he give them presents, imagining thus he would subdue his enemies, and the murmuring against him grew great on the part of



FIG. 22.—EARLY MEDIÆVAL BOSNIAN VOYVODINA ON TOMB AT STOLATZ, HERZEGOVINA

(Showing body armour and the fustanella.)

the senate and the people, who said: 'He is stripping the kingdom and giving it to the barbarians.' And when Justin, his sister's son, reigned in his stead, a troop of them came in the usual way. But Justin refused them presents, and when the Avars threatened him, he grew



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angry and said: 'Do you dead dogs dare threaten the Roman realm? I will shave off those locks of yours and then cut off your heads.'

"He then imprisoned them for six months and released them terrified, and for some time the Avars submitted to Rome and gave no trouble."

The Nemanja kings, as seen on the frescoes at Dechani, all wore the moustache. Their beards are very small. The hair of the head is completely hidden by the crown.

To-day in the Balkans the beard is worn almost solely by the Orthodox priesthood and the Moslem dervishes and hodjas. Thus the holy men of both faiths observe the hair taboo.

Laymen in all parts where the modern fashion of clean-shaving has not penetrated always wear the moustache. Perhaps vague memories of the days when the hair was burnt as ultimate disgrace haunt the mind, for the clean-shaven man, I found, was a creature condemned and despised.

In Krsto's hut I mentioned that my brother was clean-shaven, and the company, abashed, stared at their toes and were speechless. Then someone, deeply shocked, said: "No noble family will give him a wife." And kind old Pope Gjuro, wishing to be polite, said that such things might be done in London, but in Montenegro it was better not to speak of them. Whereupon the repulsive subject was dropped.

In both Albania and Montenegro a hairless man is called by the Turkish word "Chosé." Bald heads in both lands are very rare. I never saw more than a slight thinning on the top. A really bald, shining head is thought an awful thing. We were once discussing the American regulations for emigrants. A Montenegrin who had been to America angrily denounced the injustice of the health inspectors at the landing-place. "I myself," he cried, "saw them allow a man with no hair on the top of his head—a most horrible sight—to pass. And they stopped a poor boy who had only a few little bare spots on his head and said he was diseased!"

In old Serbian ballads the hero's moustache is his glory. Mighty fine were these warriors.

And there came five horsemen clad in black;  
At their head rode a hero upon a raven steed.  
His black moustachios reached below his shoulders  
And hung to the pistols in his sash.  
His breastplate ("toké") glittered through his moustachios  
As doth the moon when fifteen days old  
Shine through the branches of a fir-tree.  
Lo and behold, O my brother Mujo!  
Next to them come three horsemen  
Clad in white cloth and riding upon greys.  
At their head is a warrior on a grey steed,  
And his fair moustachios reach to his shoulders, etc.

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And so they follow on, each matching his horse to his immense moustache. As Krsto used to say with a sigh, "One does not see such sights nowadays."

It is noteworthy that the warriors carved on the mediæval grave-stones of Bosnia show no hair either on face or head. The work is very rude and shows no features either (Fig. 22).

In Albania, too, the moustache is very precious. My old friend Marko cherished a fine one. When he was young he declared he could easily tie its ends behind his head—the true test, he said, for a moustache.

In the fairy tales he used to tell, the villain was a "Chosé," a hairless man. They were always abominably wicked, he said.

The British Navy lost its prestige when clean-shaven officers appeared in Scutari in 1913.

When Marko was young and his moustache in its prime, he was kavass to the Turkish Embassy in Vienna, wore a gold-embroidered Albanian dress, and cut such a gallant figure that no less a person than one of the Rothschilds noticed him. The wealthy Jew asked the poor Albanian to quit Turkish service and be doorkeeper at the Rothschild palace. The salary offered was beyond Marko's wildest imagination. "I thought I should be a rich man," said he, "but the dog—yes, he was a dog—he told me his servants were clean-shaven and I must cut off my moustache. My moustache that I could tie behind my head! I said that not for all the gold of the Rothschilds would I cut it off." So Marko was never rich, and was never tired of telling of the insult.

So great is the respect for the moustache that the Catholic Church humours her Albanian flock, and bishops, abbots, and secular priests all wear the finest moustaches they can grow.

"If an Italian or Austrian comes here as a missionary," said a young Albanian Franciscan to me, roaring with laughter, "we shut him up till he's grown a decent moustache. It would be useless to send him to a mountain parish without one; they would hunt him out."

A great variety of head-shaves is found among both men and women of the Albanian mountains. The Catholic married women of Maltsia e Madhe shave the forehead and temples, and dye the hair black on marriage, and make their face look very large. A similar fashion is to be seen in many early Italian portraits of ladies. The Mirdite women and some of the allied groups wear a fringe over the forehead and do not dye the hair. The men of Maltsia e Madhe shave a great part of the head, and leave either one great lump on the top or two big side tufts; or they shave the back and leave the front. The temples are usually shaved, even by Scutarenes, who wear European dress.

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In the Pulati mountains the head is often shaved, except for the perchin.

In olden days a boy did not rank as a male till his head had been shaved. This was not done till after the ceremony of the first hair-cutting, described above. When once shaved he could be killed for blood-vengeance as male blood of the tribe.

Mothers would defer the head-shave if they could for a year or two in consequence, but it was a practice not approved of.

The heads of both girls and boys are shaved in the mountains, and a fringe is left over the girl's forehead.

When I was in Kosovo vilayet in 1908 I found that among the scattered Serbian peasants the heads of both girls and boys were



FIG. 23.—VARIETIES OF ALBANIAN HEAD-SHAVES

shaved. Both had a perchin, and the girls a fringe over the forehead. So soon as the girl was betrothed her hair was allowed to grow. In the rare case of her remaining unmarried I was told she would keep her head shaved.

In the Albanian mountains, where the girls were betrothed as children, I found the hair was not allowed to grow till they were marriageable.

Wood-ash and water in the mountains is the usual shaving mixture. Even in civilized places methods were sometimes barbaric. I watched a barber, who stood at the gates of Ragusa on a market-day, inviting incoming peasants to indulge in a shave before entering the town. The patient sat cross-legged on the ground. The barber gripped his head between his knees, spat freely on the razor blade, and set to work.

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The results seemed quite as good as those achieved by the most advertised shaving creams.

Head-washing in old days was a purificatory ceremony. The Roman women, says Plutarch, washed their heads on Diana's day, August 13th. What a pity head-washing has not been made part of Bank Holiday ritual.

The only head-washing ceremonial I met within the Balkans was at Ochrida, where the Bulgar women all washed their heads on the last day of Carnival. My landlady appeared without her sham pigtails and with her head dripping. She was deeply shocked to find me dry-headed. All the women at the refugee hospital I worked at were also wet-headed. The meaning of the ceremony was the renunciation of cleanliness during Lent. But I fear most of them regarded it as a penance, and so far as head-washing was concerned kept Lent all the year round.

One poor woman whose only son had been killed as a Komitadji had formally renounced washing of every kind as a sign of mourning for the rest of her life. It was a genuine expression of everlasting grief, and she was greatly respected for it.

Even so did Queen Isabella of Spain vow not to change her linen, and so gave her name to a colour. A light dun horse in France is still called "Isabelle."

### FAREWELL

So far we have traced ancient life in Balkan corners. Much yet remains to be told—of dwellings and of manner of life; of costume, of the hearth, of tools, boats, and implements; of tales and fables: but our tale is already long enough, and the rest must be left for another day.



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